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A COMMENTARY

ON THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

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PREFACE.

This Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans was written at the request of the Board of Publication whose imprint it bears. It was the desire of the board, as expressed by Dr. W. J. Darby, that I should base my work on the King James version of the epistle, and that it should little exceed a hundred thousand words, being only a handy commentary intended chiefly for those readers who, in all Churches, will ever be the majority. And yet it is hoped that the volume may not be without value to many ministers of the gospel, who may not often have opportunity to study those works which deal at greater length with questions of critical detail.

Not only, however, was the previous intellectual preparation on the part of the reader for commentary study to be taken into consideration, but his purse as well; for if the book had been much larger it would also have cost much more, and hence while it might have done a greater good to the few, it would have done less to the many.

The above words being addressed to my readers in general I now beg to address a few to my reader in particular:

My object has been to ascertain as clearly as possible at the outset the one thing of which the Apostle is writing to the Romans, and to keep distinct trace of this one thing during our movement from the beginning to the end of the epistle. It seemed to me possible to do this, for before the actual work of writing the commentary was begun, I had studied the epistle sufficiently to see that it was not made up of a

collection of disjointed chapters or paragraphs, but that in it there was a thought in which all its other thoughts found a bond of unity. I therefore ask the reader to withhold his judgment concerning the merits or demerits of my work until he has read the book through carefully, including the Introduction, taking into consideration meanwhile the words above addressed to my readers in general.

The Epistle to the Romans is regarded as the one most difficult of interpretation in the New Testament. It abounds in conjunctions and other words which denote relations; and relational words, though the smallest, are the very ones whose meanings are the most elusive. These are they upon which the reader must keep his eye constantly fixed if he would not drop the thread and lose himself in the labyrinth. And let the English reader say what he will about the unimportance of knowing Greek, it is utterly impossible to know with any certainty what the meaning in English is unless one knows what is the correspondent in the original.

Let the English reader notice, for example, as he reads the epistle, how frequently the word "for," or "because," or "therefore," etc., occurs, and let him notice the number of instances in which he can make any thing out of it. Indeed, a knowledge of the Greek original itself is not always sufficient, for instances are not infrequent in which it devolves on us to choose the one we prefer of two or more tolerably well authenticated Greek readings; or, it may be, the one we prefer of several well attested definitions. These are not matters, ordinarily, that interfere in any serious way with any of the fundamental doctrines or principles of Christianity. But, nevertheless, when one comes to interpret—and all Bible students are interpreters—it is necessary for one to decide, either tentatively or absolutely, which one of the two or more exegetical possibilities he will prefer.

No book of the New Testament has a larger literature than the Epistle to the Romans, and none has given rise to a longer list of exegetical opinions, each differing from all the others. But this only shows that it is a great epistle, and need not be a source of discouragement even to the humblest student. The "word," at least in its main significancies, "is nigh thee, even in thy mouth."

If the reader is not willing to walk without a guide through the museum wherein the wonderful thoughts of the greatest of the apostles are exhibited, let him select the one whom he is willing to follow at least for once. If he should not find in this little volume the interpretation he prefers, he may be comforted in knowing that he has only to search elsewhere, in order to find it, for hardly an interpretation could be thought of which some writer has not entertained. Are we, therefore, utterly at sea? No. Protestantism is not excessive individualism. It thinks in recognized and organized groups, and within certain defined limits every individual finds himself thinking in harmony with his group.

It has sometimes been said that it is a blessed thing that every poor sinner does not have to understand the deep things of the Bible and of theology in order to be saved. It is indeed a blessed thing—for otherwise none could be saved. If I may reverently make the comparison, it is also a blessed thing that every man does not have to understand the deep things of legal science in order to citizenship in the State. And yet every citizen may laudably desire to be intelligent and somewhat informed in regard to that noble science.

It is my earnest prayer that the Holy Spirit, in whose dispensation we live, may so use this little volume as to make it helpful to some readers in their effort to become good citizens of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

R. V. FOSTER.



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INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

Paul

I. BEFORE HIS CONVERSION.

1. **The Name:** "Saul who was also called Paul." The fact that he whom we commonly call Paul bore also the name Saul has been accounted for in various ways. Some have supposed that he obtained the name from his connection with the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus, of which we have an account in the 13th chapter of Acts. This opinion has been held by many eminent scholars, both ancient and modern. But it does not seem to the present writer at all probable that either Paul himself or his friends adopted the name because of the part which he had in the conversion of the Roman governor of Cyprus. To have immortalized his elation over the event in any such way as this would have been utterly unlike Paul. Others have held that the name which his mother gave him was Saul, that being a name well known in the tribe of Benjamin to which he belonged, but that in his early manhood he came to be called Paulus because he was small of stature.* The most probable explanation

* 2 Cor. x. 10. *Paulus* means *little*.

of the two names is that "Saul" was his Aramaic or Hebrew name, the name which his Jewish parents gave him on the day of his circumcision, and that later on when he came to be known by Gentiles, perhaps even before his conversion, he also received the Roman name Paul. It had never been uncommon for Israelites to receive two names, as in the case of Abraham, Jacob, Solomon, Daniel, etc., and at this period of their history many Jews also received names of Greek or Roman origin. Peter, the distinguished apostle, bore a Greek name, as did also Philip and Stephen. Forever severed, as he was, from Judaism, both in his beliefs and in his apostolic labors, it is not strange that he should have preferred his Gentile name. And by this name in his Epistles he always called himself. He began to be in a pre-eminent sense the apostle to the Gentiles when he landed on Cyprus, the scene of his first foreign missionary labors, and from that time onward his Gentile friend and companion, Luke, speaks of him as Paul. It is probable also that his Roman name would serve him a better purpose in his capacity of Roman citizen than would his Hebrew name. When Luke wrote the Acts, Paul was an old man, worn and weary, and languishing perhaps in a Roman prison. When he first appears in history as the young and violent persecutor of the cause for which he afterward gave his life, he is introduced as "Saul who is also Paul;" and the brief formula would be enough to make Gentile or Jewish readers, who had not known it before, pause and think that so great a transition from the man "Saul" to the man "Paul" could not be brought about unless the cause were also a great reality.

2. *His Birthplace.* Tarsus, the birthplace of the writer of the Epistle to the Romans, was about five hundred miles almost due north of Jerusalem. It was situated near the shore of the Mediterranean, on both banks of the cool and swift Cydnus. At the time of Paul's birth it had been no mean city for hundreds of years. Rawlinson tells us on the authority of ancient inscriptions, that it was founded by the Assyrian king Sennacherib about B.C. 685; and from Xenophon, who wrote about B.C. 400, we learn that it was already a great and flourishing city. Subsequently it became the seat of a school of philosophy and general education more famous even than the schools of Alexandria or of Athens, and which sent forth teachers to Rome itself and other distant places. The great Stoic philosopher, Athenodorus, the teacher of the Emperor Augustus, taught in the school at Tarsus, as did also the Platonic Nestor a little later on, or about the time when the young Saul was first walking the thronged streets of the great city.

Tarsus became a Roman city B.C. 66, receiving its freedom from Anthony, and the dignity of being classed as a metropolis from Augustus. It was the capital of a rich province, and in its harbor might be seen ships from all parts of the Mediterranean. Greeks, Romans, and Jews abounded there—"the three peoples of God's election," through whose unconscious agency was to be brought about the fullness of time, and the chief instrument in the world-wide proclamation of the gospel of this fullness was also to be the young citizen of Tarsus, whose name was Saul. But for the most part, "the inhabitants were vain, effeminate and luxurious, more like Phœnicians than Greeks. Their sensuous Eastern religion in these

golden days of affluence had more attraction for them than the grave philosophy of the Porch, and the legend supposed to be graven on the statue of Sardanapalus, at the neighbor city of Anchiale, 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' which Paul quotes in 1 Cor. xv. 32, might have been the motto of the mass of the townsmen."

3. *His Early Life.* It had long been "the time of the dispersion," and we know not when nor from what place Paul's father or forefather went to Tarsus. We are told in the Acts that Paul was a Roman citizen, and he himself also informs us that he was born a freeman. But no clew is given us to the ground on which this exceptional distinction was based, and for the reason that the statement concerning his citizenship is only made incidentally in the course of the narrative, and is nowhere the special topic of the historian's treatment, it is extremely far-fetched, therefore, to doubt the reality of his citizenship, as some have done, merely because the ground of it is not given. It was probably due to some distinguished service which one of the family in former days had rendered to some distinguished Roman; though the most that can be affirmed with considerable certainty is that it was not due to the fact that he was born in Tarsus; for this city did not possess such rank in the list of Roman cities as to confer the privilege of citizenship as a mere matter of birthright. As a rule it had to be either earned or bought; and the fact that it had been earned or bought by one of Paul's ancestors of near or remoter degree is a proof that his family was one of some social distinction.

The exact date of Paul's birth is not known to us.

He speaks of himself as an old man when in the year A.D. 62, he was lying in prison at Rome. He is spoken of as a young man when in the year A.D. 33, he participated in the stoning of Stephen. Hence he must have been born very nearly the same time as Jesus. "When the boy Jesus was playing in the streets of Nazareth, the boy Paul was playing in the streets of his native town, away on the other side of the ridges of Lebanon. They seemed likely to have totally different careers, yet by the mysterious arrangements of Providence these two lives, like streams flowing from opposite water-sheds, were one day, as river and tributary, to mingle together." And both Paul and Jesus carried with them into their subsequent ministries as Master and disciple, the influences, apparently, which were about them in their early years. Jesus loved the country, and much of his ministry was spent in places where nature was more visible than the work of man. He loved to draw his illustrations from rural sources—the birds of the air, the lilies of the field, the shepherd leading his sheep, the sower sowing in the field by the wayside, the tares, the house built upon the sand, or upon a rock, and the vineyard, and the husbandman, etc. And the nature of his earthly ministry was in deepest harmony with these influences of his boyhood. But with Paul we are in a different atmosphere. He was born and reared in the great city. He was used to scenes of tramp and hurry, and monuments of human energy; and is thus wisely fitted to become the bearer of Christianity to the world's great centers of population and power. He preaches and writes to the people gathered at Antioch, and Ephesus, and Thessalonica, and Corinth, and Rome. He is equally at home with Jew, and Greek,

and Roman, and barbarian of nameless blood. And we see that his speech abounds in illustrations drawn from scenes of busy life—the athlete engaged in the wrestle or the race, the soldier panoplied in full armor, the swordsman who fights not as one beating the air, and many others of like sort, all of which were matters of daily observation to those whom he addressed. Jesus himself consecrated this Paul to his ministry among the Gentiles of many cities and many nationalities; and both in respect to his mission and the grandeur of zeal, and energy, and judgment, with which he accomplished it, no man in the New Testament history is more unique than he.

We do not know how much of his education Paul received in the schools at Tarsus. It is probable, however, that he lived there until he was at least twelve years of age; and that he attended the Jewish school in connection with the synagogue, learning the principal facts in regard to the history of his own remarkable nation, and reading the Old Testament Scriptures in the Alexandrian Greek version, from which he afterward made the most of his quotations when writing his epistles. His father being a man of some prominence, as his Roman citizenship may imply, and being doubtless also a Pharisee of the straightest type, would lay no small stress on the importance of his son's knowing the literature and traditions of his own people. He must also have acquired a practical knowledge of the Latin tongue, as well as of the native dialects of Cilicia. The fact that in his writings he rarely quoted from the Greek literature does not argue a want of acquaintance with it; and the fact that in two instances at least he does quote from Greek poets does argue a greater degree of familiarity with the literature than was pos-

sessed by the vast majority even of the better class of Jews. It is not at all likely that even a stray copy of Aratus, or Cleanthus, or any Greek poet or philosopher, was often on sale in the Jerusalem book market.

At Tarsus Paul learned the trade of tent-making out of the Cilician hair-cloth so extensively manufactured there. From this, however, we can infer nothing as to the poverty or wealth of his father, for in view of the uncertainties of human fortune, it was the excellent custom of every Jewish parent to teach his son a trade. Even the most learned doctors of the law had their trade, and it was not regarded as disreputable for the most learned rabbi to make his living by working with his hands. Indeed, it was regarded as a degradation of the law for a Jew to make his living by teaching the law. The combination of some secular business with the study of the law was especially recommended by the great Gamaliel. But whether, as a matter of expediency or otherwise, the trade which Paul learned in his youth served him an excellent purpose in his after years; and in the light of the peculiar civilization of his day it was not regarded as a strange or pathetic thing that the apostle, even in his old age, should preach gratuitously and earn his living by making tents. In the light of his Jewish training and surroundings, his saying that the laborer in the gospel "is worthy of his hire," is very significant, and one which not even apostolic authority could have insisted upon in his day.

At the age of twelve the Jewish boy became what was technically called *bar mitsoah*, or "son of the law," which meant that he was then expected to begin to observe the Mosaic law like older people, and was

taken up to the temple feasts, and began to observe the feasts, especially the great day of Atonement. It may have been about this time that the young Saul began his career at Jerusalem as a student under the great doctors of the law, of whom Rabban Gamaliel was at that time the most distinguished. But whatever may have been the exact date, the ardent youth must have entered upon his studies with the greatest enthusiasm, and it would seem that his zeal never abated. While the young Saul was thus pushing forward with the utmost eagerness to the day of his graduation in the college at Jerusalem, the young Jesus, with whom he was afterward to be so intimately associated, was quietly abiding his time, growing in favor with God and man, in the life of obscurity at Nazareth. It was the custom of the youthful rabbis, on completing their studies, to scatter abroad over the world wherever there were Jews, for the purpose of beginning their practical work. Of course we do not know when Paul received his degree and left Jerusalem, nor do we know where he went, but it must have been about the time that Jesus began his public ministry, and he must have gone to a city which Jesus did not visit, for he himself tells us that he never saw Jesus in the flesh. Had he remained in Jerusalem, so zealous and rigid a Pharisee would doubtless have met him who attracted so much attention in the temple and rebuked the Pharisees so scathingly. But after a while he came back. Jesus, the Nazarine, was no longer there in person, but in his stead there was a hated sect of Nazarines, followers of Jesus, and Saul began to persecute them bitterly. They did not hold his views concerning the Mosaic law, nor did they hold their own views silently. Paul's was an astute mind, but he

forgot during at least one short period of his life that the best way to destroy a supposed wrong is to build up the opposite right. No error, whether real or unreal, can ever be eradicated by dragging its advocates to prison either in the literal or figurative sense.

There is no conclusive evidence that Saul ever became a member of the Sanhedrin, and it is probable that he never did. He was an intense Pharisee, he had a profound knowledge of the law, he was skilled in legal disputations, he was an active and violent persecutor of the first Christians, he had the confidence of Jews in authority, and this is all that can be said with certainty in respect to this ever open question. And it is a question, after all, of no importance. It is probable, however, that he would have become a member, or else greater than a member, had he not become a Christian. Nor can it ever be shown that he was, or was not, at any period of his life a married man. It is quite certain that he had no wife while he was an apostle, but any one is at liberty to suppose that he was a widower. Paul himself nowhere says any thing that is opposed to such a supposition. It was a rule that members of the Sanhedrin should be married men, but as his membership in that body is an open question, so also is this other in so far as it depends upon the former. Of Paul's family in Jerusalem all that we know is, that he had a married sister there, and that she had a son who was instrumental on one occasion in rescuing his uncle from the violence of the Jews.

II. SAUL'S CONVERSION.

1. *The Preparation.* Saul's conversion was not as sudden as it may usually seem to the casual reader to have been. That is to say, it did not take place without a previous mental or spiritual preparation therefor. He was not breathing out threatenings against the Christians when he was converted, nor for some little while before. The journey from Jerusalem to Damascus was a many days' journey, and it is a fact quite worthy of notice that he was not converted near Jerusalem. One may easily do in the excitement of the moment and when the object of his rage is at hand that which he can not do after calm reflection. On the long and silent journey there was opportunity for the still small voice. It could assert itself in the calm of the Syrian plain as it could not do amid the passionate and whirling life at Jerusalem. Saul's zeal as a persecutor brought him to his critical moment, and at the critical moment his zeal failed him. But it is not probable that he was satisfied thoroughly with himself when he left Jerusalem. He wanted to be in a state of harmony with God, and he felt that he was not, and his zeal in persecuting the sect which he thought was obnoxious to God did not bring him that sense of inward peace which he may have thought it would; and his going to Damascus to engage in further persecutions was only with the hope of buying at a larger price in the same coin the peace which he desired and had not obtained. It was as Luther doing small penances and then walking over the mountains to Rome that he might do larger ones, seeking peace and finding it

not. There were, however, plenty of Pharisees at Jerusalem who were restful enough of heart—restful because they were dead. The commandment had not come to them, and hence they had no consciousness of sin or of being in discord with God. But Saul's profound knowledge of the whole Mosaic law, and his keen appreciation of its spiritual import, would by no means permit him to be satisfied with the dead formality of mere outward observance. When the seed which Gamaliel sowed fell into Paul's heart it fell into deeper and richer soil than the average, and it was destined to spring up and produce fruit which Gamaliel himself did not dream of. And the subject of the address of Stephen, in whose martyrdom he himself had participated, was the spiritual significance of the law. Saul had too keen and profound an intellect, and too sensitive a nature, not to see the point of the address plainly. And his unrest was made only the more unrestful. He had opportunity to think on all these things deliberately and at length as he traveled toward Damascus; and the vision of the martyr's face "as it had been that of an angel," was doubtless often before him in the quiet hours, and the memory of his dying words, "Father, lay not this sin to their charge," must have abided with him. Years afterward in one of his references to his life before his conversion the only event which he mentions in particular was the fact that he had participated in the stoning of Stephen. The words would seem to have been spoken as with a suppressed sob. "Thou knowest that I consented to the death of thy martyr." The central thought of Stephen's preaching, and his prayer, and his death, were the blows which Saul could not resist. And so at last, far away

from Jerusalem on the road to Damascus, the conflict with his weakening Pharisaism on the one hand and his increasing convictions on the other culminated in the everlasting downfall of Saul the Pharisee. Such was the natural process which led to his conversion, and through such a process, differing perhaps only in the intensity of the struggle, has many another man been caused to pass. The Law is always the Slave who must lead man to Christ. There is a light, as real as any light, which we can not see with our usual eyes; there is a voice, as real as any voice, which we can not hear with our usual ears. And when the darkness hitherto has been dark enough, and the conviction and struggle suddenly culminate in the overthrow of our old selves, then our other eyes may be opened to the Light from heaven, and our other ears to the voice of Him whom we had persecuted; and it is no doubt true that this quickening of our spiritual senses may, if intense enough, produce a temporary paralysis of our physical senses. There may have been more than all this in the incidents connected with Saul's conversion; but whether so or not all this is sufficient to meet the demands of the narrative which has been furnished by Paul himself and the historian Luke. Paul related the incidents as he actually experienced them, and he regarded the experience as abundant proof that he really had been persecuting the glorified Son of God. And all the logic of Jerusalem and the Jewish world could not force him to gainsay his own experience. He knew his past mental conflict, he knew his present peace, he remembered the Light which had flashed upon him, and the Voice which he had heard, too well for further debate with himself.

2. *From What to What.* But *from* what was Saul converted and *to* what was he converted? it being understood that we use the term conversion here, not in the sense of regeneration or the change "from nature to grace." His new birth differed in no essential respect from the regeneration, or new birth of any other man. But when we speak of Saul's conversion, from what do we understand that he was converted, and to what? It is not quite right to say that he was converted from Judaism to Christianity. That is what Paul's Jewish enemies were always affirming, and it is what Paul himself often felt it necessary to deny. Strictly speaking he was not converted from Judaism, for in the true sense of that term he was always more faithful to Judaism than the Jews who opposed him. Christianity and the genuine old Judaism from Abraham to Moses, and onward were only two phases of one and the same thing. Paul knew very well that justification, harmony with God, salvation in short, which was the end ostensibly aimed at by both Jew and Christian, was attained in precisely the same way in the Old Testament as it was according to the teachings of Stephen, himself, and other Christians. It was the Jew who had perverted the teaching of the law, who had failed to recognize the spirit of the law, and not Paul. He, having seen it himself, meant to call his brother Jew back to the true spiritual interpretation of the law, such indeed as he might often have read in the great Psalmist (Psalm li. 17, 19; and the great Prophet Isaiah i. 11-16, etc.). There could, in the very nature of the case, be but one way for man to have peace with God, and this way was as open to one man as to another. The old Judaism recognized this, as Stephen and Paul well knew. It

was the scribe and Pharisee who by their manifold traditions had made the law of no effect. It was these who had criminally failed to understand their own Scriptures, forsaking the old landmarks, and also leading the people away. So far as the outward form of Judaism was concerned, circumcision and all the other details, Paul cared very little for these one way or another, neither on the part of himself nor of his converts, provided only the inward spirit could be duly recognized. The continuation of the old ordinances was quite consistent with Paul's views, but they were really not essential, and there was really no reason why the converts, whether Jews or Gentiles, should be incumbered with them, they were in the first place only tokens and memorials of the divine purpose of salvation, and of their own relation to this purpose; and a much simpler system of tokens and memorials, as for instance an organized community of those who held to Judaism in its spirit, with a few simple rites, would do just as well now as the old elaborate system had formerly done. And indeed a good deal better, for the simpler system would not be so burdensome, nor so likely to conceal from view the true inner core of the matter—which was that, whatever outward forms there might be, the only way after all for any man to be in a state of harmony with God, and hence really happy, was to have that disposition toward God which is often expressed by the one word, Faith. It was in part then, these views *to which* Paul was converted, and it was the lifeless and prevalent Pharisaism *from which* he was converted.

But having been turned about to such an extent as this, Paul could not fail also to see that the salvation for which he had longed was the right no less of the

Gentile than of the Jew, for how could God prefer one sinful person to another sinful in the same sense and in the same degree? And this led him to the grasp of Israel's real mission, which was, not the selfish enjoyment of a gift given to it only, but that it should be the means of distributing the knowledge of a common gift to all men, and of bringing all men into actual possession of it. It was this farther step that widened and deepened the chasm between Paul and the Pharisees.

Paul had seen the germs of these views to which he was converted in the teachings of Jesus as represented in the preaching of Stephen and other first Christians in Jerusalem, and he had detected their significance and tendency with a keener insight perhaps than the majority of these earliest preachers themselves had done; and the very moment he became convinced that this Jesus was really the Messiah, by witnessing for himself his glorified humanity, the question was settled forever with him. He did not abandon the Old Testament, for he constantly quoted from it in confirmation of his views, and hence he did not abandon Judaism. He simply abandoned its perversions, linking in his teaching the true old with the new phase, and endeavoring in a life-long effort, so far as his relation to his brother Jews was concerned, to call them back to the ancient doctrine of a world-wide salvation by grace through faith, rather than a Jewish salvation by works consisting in legal observances. But never was any man more misunderstood by his own countrymen than was Paul. Savonarola, John Huss, Jerome, and some others, have in a small way, lived a little in advance of their day; but Paul was eighteen centuries in advance of his people—and how

much more than this? for the Jews as a people have not yet moved up abreast of Paul.

3. *Paul's Relation to Other Apostles.* But we might as well ask just here, in what doctrinal attitude did this conversion of Paul, as above defined, place him in respect to the other apostles—Peter and James in particular. And we feel obliged to answer the question by saying that they occupied essentially the same ground, though they did not see their position so clearly as Paul saw his, nor did they have so thorough a grasp of its details and tendencies. Like Paul, Peter and James held that that which after a while was called the gospel was, not something essentially different from Judaism, but only another phase of Judaism; and a phase at that with which the old ordinances were not at all inconsistent. Circumcision and the rest, thought they, can serve their proper end as symbols and memorials of God's redemptive purpose no less truly under the new phase than they did under the old. But Paul reached his conclusion in regard to the share which the Gentiles might have in this salvation in advance of Peter and James, and with a greater degree of mental assurance of the correctness of his position. And at last when these two leading apostles did advance so far as to see that the gospel might be preached also to the Gentiles, they were still a good deal more dim sighted than Paul in regard to the question of the old ordinances. With Paul the matter of their observance or non-observance, whether by Gentile or Jewish convert, was a mere matter of expediency, while with Peter and James it was, for a considerable time at least, rather a matter of conscience. The Holy Spirit was

leading the apostles into all the truth, was leading them gradually. Every mind is not so constituted that it can be caused to reach the truth at a single bound; nor indeed had Paul himself so reached it. The usual method of the Spirit in leading the Church forward from truth to truth is the gradual method of the rising sun.

Had the Jews as a people intelligently accepted the new phase of Judaism, or of what is commonly called the Old Testament dispensation, introduced by Christ and his apostles, they might, without any violence whatever to the doctrines of the gospel have kept up the old Mosaic ordinances. Circumcision and baptism might still have been employed as tokens of membership, and the sacrifices, and the Lord's-supper might still have been employed as tokens of faith in the broken body and the shed blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. That was what the sacrifices used to be, or at least that was their original attention—memorials of God's promise and purpose of redemption, though the old Israelites did not always so regard them. It was easy enough doctrinally thus to retain the ordinances, and at the same time admit all that was involved in the Messiahship of Jesus; and Peter and James, at first at least, were in favor of doing this. But Paul was more progressive and bolder, seeing clearly that so much symbolism had already, under its abuses, concealed the truth from the people to a greater extent than it would reveal it; and seeing also that there could be no manner of use in incumbering the new phase of Mosaism which they preached with such a mass of burdensome and already perverted ordinances. Some minds can not thrive on the truth without the aid of outward

symbols of truth, but Paul's was not such a mind. And so at the very outset of his ministry he differed with Peter and James—not at all in regard to the inner and essential truth, but only in regard to the question as to whether they ought to employ a certain set of outward symbols. Paul's field of labor evidently did not lie within the walls of Jerusalem, and it was a blessed thing for the Gentile world that it did not. That was the providential place of the much more conservative James, for the Jews of Jerusalem also must have at least a briefly lingering opportunity.

III. AFTER HIS CONVERSION.

1. *Preaching Jesus as the Son of God.*

After the culminating point in his conversion was reached on the road near Damascus, and the sight of the living and glorified body of Jesus of Nazareth, and the incidents which occurred in the house of Ananias, Paul straightway preached this Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. This truth was the one of fundamental importance in the new phase of the Old Testament religion called the gospel, and of which we spoke in the foregoing section. To admit the divine Sonship of Jesus, was to admit every thing that constituted the gospel. So it was, at least, with any Jew, though not so perhaps with the modern Gentile who is also nominally a Christian. He may be indisposed to doubt the historical evidence in favor of the divinity of Jesus, and yet be any thing else than a Christian at heart. If Paul could induce his hearers, whether Jewish or Gentile, to believe that Jesus was really the Son of God the fundamental point would be gained, for though it might not set

them right in all matters of private morals and religious worship, it would be equivalent to the full committal of themselves to the gospel. He could make no progress, therefore, in winning converts until this doctrinal point was gained, and hence the emphasis which he so often places in his preaching on the evidential value of the facts pertaining to Jesus, particularly his resurrection, of which he himself had ocular proof. "If Christ be not risen our hope is vain." If Christ be not risen we have no proof that he was the Son of God; if he was not the Son of God his death was of no avail, and there is no basis of hope for peace or harmony with God—no more than if the world had never heard or dreamed of Christ. The first preaching of the apostle was therefore necessarily Christological and argumentative, the heart and the life having to be reached through that mental faculty which apprehends evidence.

How long Paul continued to preach at Damascus we have no possible means of knowing, the "many days" mentioned in the account in the Acts being indefinite. It was three years, however, before he returned to Jerusalem. He went from Damascus into Arabia, but to what place or places it is useless to inquire. No man will ever know. But it is not probable that he went in order that he might in solitude adjust himself to his new convictions, or receive revelations concerning what he afterward called his gospel. He was already adjusted most thoroughly to his new convictions, and he received revelations from time to time during his ministry as he needed them. He may have gone into Arabia for the purpose of preaching Jesus as the Savior, and the way of peace with God to a city or people not mentioned in

connection with his ministry; or he may have gone for the purpose of obtaining the rest and strength which would doubtless be much needed after so long a period of intense mental conflict and excitement as that through which he had just passed. We know not. We can only say that this retirement of Paul from history was no period of idle and listless wandering.

After a while he returned to Damascus where he preached Jesus with such earnestness and boldness that the Jews took counsel as to how they might slay him, as they in Jerusalem had for the same cause slain Stephen. But his time was not come, and he fled to Jerusalem. Although it had been three years since he had left Jerusalem, and although the whole current of his life had changed, the brethren there, it seems, had received no information concerning him, they were afraid to receive him, for Saul, the fierce persecutor of the Christians, was still fresh in their memory. He might now be only a wolf in sheep's clothing. But Barnabas knew him; and so Paul began to preach to that same audience of Grecian Jews which a few years before had been addressed by Stephen, and of which he himself had been one. But only fifteen days had passed before he was obliged to flee again for his life. He went to Cesarea and thence, perhaps by ship, to Tarsus.

2. *Cilicia and Syria.* For four or five years more Paul disappears from history. The great work of his life as the recognized apostle to the Gentile world is not yet open to him. We can easily infer, however, that during this long interval of silence on the part of the historian, Paul is engaged in preaching

the gospel in unofficial ways in his native Tarsus and other parts of Cilicia. At last Barnabas is sent to Antioch by the Church in Jerusalem to engage in the great work that was going on there. And Barnabas remembers Saul, and going on to Tarsus in search of him again brings him into the sphere of the Church's work. For one whole year he and Saul preach the gospel in the power and demonstration of the Spirit to the multitudes of Grecian Jews and others who thronged the synagogues in the great Syrian city near the sea. This year's work brought Paul face to face with what was to be his life's mission. The Spirit said "Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul." The Church placed itself into what we may call official relation with the heathen world. The gates were opened; and Saul sailed from Antioch to Cyprus, and thence to various points in Asia Minor on his first great missionary tour. Henceforth he is pre-eminently the recognized missionary to the Gentiles, and henceforth he is in labors and suffering "more abundant than they all," founding churches all along from the Cydnus to Italy, and perhaps beyond, and having on his shoulders the burden of them all. He wrote for the benefit of the Churches which he established, or which were under his direct influence, and for the benefit of the Church of all subsequent ages, epistles making in all nearly twice as much as the apostle John wrote, and nearly a third of the entire New Testament. It was largely through Paul and his subordinate workers that Asia Minor, the islands of the Mediterranean Sea, and the western Roman world, were conquered for Christ.

3. *Other Missionary Labors.* From the time of Paul's conversion to the date of his first missionary

tour from Antioch was a period of seven or eight years. From the beginning of this tour to the supposed date of his martyrdom by Nero, was a period of about twenty years. Four of these years, or on the hypothesis of a second imprisonment at Rome even more than four, were spent in captivity as the "prisoner of Christ;" and with the chain about his arm, the other end of which was fastened to a Roman soldier, the apostle, whose zeal could by no means be quenched, preached Christ and wrote immortal epistles. Sometimes he was in perils of the sea. Sometimes he might be seen working as a day-laborer at tent-making so that he might enable himself to preach the gospel. Sometimes he was in peril of wild beasts, whether on his journeys or in the gladiatorial arena, forced to fight for the amusement of a Roman or barbarian rabble. Sometimes he might be seen lying by the roadside as one dead, stoned by the brutal mob. Sometimes he was collecting funds from the Churches which he founded, for the benefit of the impoverished members of the mother Church at Jerusalem which was always loath to receive him. Sometimes he was lying in a Roman jail, beaten with as many stripes as the law would allow. And at last when the end was near at hand he could say in looking back over it all, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith;" and no man who was ever born into this world could say it with more truth than did Paul. In point of suffering and self-sacrifice, the labors of the greatest evangelists of our country pale into trifles and shame as compared with his. And yet it is surprising how little space is devoted in the biblical narrative and epistles to the details concerning Paul's privations and sufferings. If Paul had been what some of his mod-

ern critics have presumed to pronounce him—the uninspired leader of a mere anti-Judaising sect—we should have had much more of his autobiography and much less of his gospel, whether in the Acts or in the Epistles. He conceals the one that he may reveal the other.

4. *His Person and Character.* It is commonly supposed that Paul possessed no graces of person. He himself informs us incidentally that he was insignificant in stature, and mentions in the same manner his physical infirmities. But he did possess the graces of Jewish and Greek culture. The specimens of his oral addresses which Luke has preserved for us do not show any want of the graces of the orator. He never on any occasion betrays any assumption of contempt for the proprieties of speech or personal bearing. Through all his ministry he was a man of abounding earnestness, but he was also everywhere and under all circumstances the Christian gentleman. He neither wrote nor spoke the polished Greek of the classic Athens of former days. That sort of Greek was practically obsolete in his time; and when he addressed the Athenians on Mars Hill the great philosophers and poets were gone long ago, and it is not probable that there were any in his audience whose Greek was any better than his—though many may have thought so.

But whatever may be said of his person and outward culture, in character and spirit his converts might well have afforded to imitate him even as he also imitated Christ. Life had no value for him apart from the privilege and the daily act of living for Christ. He was always serious and yet always cheerful. He was always earnest, admitting of no half measures. He

was always zealous and yet always prudent. He was as firm as adamant and yet as tender as a nursing mother. He was liberal of spirit, having nothing in him of the intolerant and narrow bigot. He was perfectly willing for the Jewish Christian to observe his ceremonial scruples, but he would fight to his dying day for the untrammelled privilege of offering an untrammelled gospel to the heathen. He was as high-minded as a prince, and yet he was ever clothed with the garments of humility. He was always considerate and courteous in all his relations with others whether of high or low degree. He was not perfect; but he was a higher type of man than Augustine, or Luther, or Calvin. He approached more nearly to the perfect character of the Christ who was absolutely all to him than any other man that has lived on this earth since his day.

CHAPTER II.

The Epistle to the Romans.

I. DATE.

The Epistle to the Romans was written by Paul while at Corinth, a few weeks before his fifth and last visit to Jerusalem since his conversion. The date assigned to it, by Michaelis, Lardner, Macknight, Alford, Conybeare, and scholars generally who have treated the subject, is A.D. 58. Compare Rom. xv. 25, 26 with Acts xx. 1-3. For the place at which it was written compare Rom. xvi. 23 with 1 Cor. i. 14. The Epistle to the Romans was the fifth which Paul wrote. All of his epistles should be read in connection with and in the order of his history as given in the Acts. So far as it can be ascertained the order is as follows: 1 Thessalonians, A.D. 51, or about seven years after he left Antioch with Barnabas on his first journey; 2 Thessalonians, A.D. 53; Galatians, A.D. 55; 1 and 2 Corinthians, A.D. 57; Romans, A.D. 58; Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, A.D. 63, during his imprisonment at Rome; 1 Timothy and Titus, A.D. 67, from Macedonia; 2 Timothy, A.D. 68, from Rome. These epistles present various doctrines and practical admonitions generally, according to the circumstances of the Churches to which they were addressed.

II. AUTHENTICITY.

That Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans has always been admitted by the Church and by all individ-

ual critics whether conservative or radical, ancient or modern. Even such critics as Baur, who rejected the Pauline authorship of most of the epistles ascribed to Paul, admits that he wrote the one to the Romans. Some critics have doubted, however, whether the last chapter was addressed to the Church at Rome, thinking that the first fifteen chapters may have been addressed to the Romans, and that the whole epistle, including the added sixteenth chapter, was also sent to the Ephesians. The objections to the last chapter as a part of the original epistle as sent to the Christians at Rome are by no means unanswerable, though the question is not one of sufficient practical importance to justify us in devoting space to it here. The first quotation made from the epistle by any writer was the passage, chapter i. 29-32, quoted by Clemens Romanus, A.D. 96. Subsequently verses from it were cited or quoted word for word by Ignatius (A.D. 115), Polycarp (A.D. 118), and various other early Christian writers.

III. THE CHURCH AT ROME.

At the time when Paul addressed his epistle to the Christians in Rome, Jews had been there for more than one hundred and fifty years, and constituted no inconsiderable element of its million and a half of population. Great numbers of them had been transported thither by Pompey, B.C. 63; and Josephus tells us that an embassy sent to Rome shortly after the death of Herod the Great, were met by eight hundred thousand Jewish residents of the mighty city. And at the time when Paul was writing this epistle, their influence was so strong, says Seneca, that "the conquered race gave laws to the conquerors." The

Romans hated them as it has always been the lot of the Jew to be hated. Tiberius tried in vain to get rid of them; Claudius sought in vain to banish them.

How did Christianity reach Rome? Most probably as every thing else reached it; for not only did all the roads in Italy lead thither, but all the roads in the then known world. People from Rome went to all quarters of the earth, and people from all quarters of the earth went to Rome. It is probable that a Christian element had been in the great city since the day of Pentecost when there may have been many Jew and Gentile proselytes from Rome at Jerusalem attending the annual feasts; and converts from Ephesus, and Corinth, Philippi, and other cities of Asia Minor and Greece had doubtless gone thither from time to time in great numbers. In his letter Paul presents his greetings to old friends by name whom he had know at Ephesus, while on the contrary some well-known ones as Pudens, and Claudia, whose names are elsewhere identified (2 Tim. iv. 21) with the Roman Church were not there when the letter was written. They were coming and going, and Paul seems to have kept very well posted as to the movements of those who were his aids in his work. Tacitus, writing of the Neronian persecution which occurred about six years after Paul wrote this epistle, tells us that Christian martyrs (to say nothing of the number not slain) were a great multitude.

But it does not seem that the large Christian community at Rome, thus formed by accretions from all parts of the Church, possessed at this time any regular organization, though it is probable that the members met each other at frequent assemblies of some sort, at which the epistle was doubtless read

again and again. No allusion is contained in it to elders or other officers of an organized Church. The Church was composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christians, as the epistle itself indicates in several places. But the great critics are about equally divided on the question as to which element was the majority; it is useless to discuss it, for the data is inadequate, and it can never be determined with certainty. The epistle is addressed to both.

IV.—THE OCCASION AND DESIGN.

As it is quite probable that the Church at Rome really had no apostolic founder; as it is also quite probable that while Paul was at Corinth the Christians at Rome were a numerous flock having no shepherd; as it would be no infringement, therefore, of the courtesies of the apostolate, or the pastoral functions of another, for Paul to write to them; and as a good many of them were doubtless his own converts and personal friends who had gone thither from other parts of the empire; it was quite natural that Paul should desire to write to them, especially as he could not for the present accomplish his longing to make them a personal visit. Phœbe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, a few miles out from Corinth, was going to Rome; and, in the absence of regular postal facilities for others than officers of the empire, Paul takes advantage of this opportunity to send the Christians at Rome a letter. Such was the occasion.

In order to see, without going into details here, the design which Paul had in view in writing such an epistle as he did, we must recall the fact that the great Imperial city was the meeting place of Gentiles

and Jews from all parts of the world. A letter from Paul, on the fundamental question in issue between the Christians and their opponents, if read over and over again for months or years in the assemblies at Rome, would be heard by more people than could in that day be reached by a single epistle directed to any other city in the world. It was a golden opportunity to set forth, defend, and advertise his gospel, which Paul could not suffer to escape him. When he writes to the Thessalonians, the Corinthians, Galatians, and others, he must for the most part write such letters as are demanded by the circumstances of these Churches respectively. But to write, not to the organized Church at Rome, but "to all them that be at Rome," was very much the same as writing a Catholic epistle, a letter to Christians of whatever locality; and there was no better way to have it scattered over the whole empire than to send it first to Rome where it would doubtless be copied a great many times by the Christians who were constantly coming and going. So Paul designs to write such an epistolary treatise as would meet the wants of Christians generally, at that time and thereafter, and such a one as he would wish to have thus scattered abroad. And such a one he did write. The Epistle to the Romans is addressed to the Church in all the world and in all the ages. The Church may, as some may think, already have reached the point where it no longer needs a special inspired epistle to advise it against the evil of drinking wine to excess at the Lord's-supper, and other such practices; but it never will reach that point in its progress where it can cease to reiterate with the utmost emphasis the truth that Christ, and Christ alone, is the power of God

unto salvation to every one that believeth, whether Jew or Gentile.

V.—STYLE OF THE EPISTLE.

It is impossible to adequately appreciate the Epistle to the Romans, either in its separate arguments or as a whole, apart from what we may call an adequate valuation of its style. The epistle was written, in the first place, in the Greek language, a heathen language put to the very usual service of expressing thought which was wholly foreign to it. It was not only putting heavenly contents into an earthen vessel, but into an earthen vessel which was already filled with something more or less different, and which therefore had to be displaced to as great an extent as possible by the new. And after the thought is once put into the Greek vessels by inspired hands it has to be transferred by human hands to English vessels for the benefit of ourselves. This of course may greatly increase whatever original difficulty there may have been in clearly apprehending the thought.

But apart from this infirmity of the Greek, or any other language, when thus called to an unusual service, the subject itself which Paul treats is one to which neither the Jewish nor Gentile mind of that age was accustomed. The view which Paul presents was a difficult one to grasp because it was a most radical innovation upon the current doctrine of human salvation—doing, though strange to say, perhaps even more violence to the preconceived views of his brother Jews, than it did to those of his Gentile readers. The plan of salvation by grace through faith is not the depraved human heart's favorite one

in any age, especially if it be further informed that the faith is to be reposed in him who was once known as Jesus of Nazareth.

But Paul himself, though an inspired writer, was an earthen vessel. Or, to change the figure: When the light from the sun has passed through the lens, it is still the pure light of the sun; but it has not the same color on this side of the lens as it had on the other. There it was immaculate white, here it is blue, or green, or orange. Nor is it so easy to see with the lens as it would be to see without it; but refracted light is the best we can have in this world. Truth clothed in the colors of the rainbow; after a while we may see it in unsullied white. Paul, Peter, John, and the rest, are for the present our lenses, for through them the Sun's light comes to us.

Dwelling for a moment on such considerations as these, we may easily see that it was quite natural even for Peter to say that there are some things "in brother Paul hard to be understood." And the very fact that Paul could be used by the Holy Spirit as the medium for conveying such truths is of itself a proof that he was in point of intellect beyond the average even of the inspired writers.

One of the necessities, therefore, under which one or more of these various disadvantages, under which Paul wrote, place him, was the necessity of employing many figures of speech, or the same figure many times. These figures abound in the Epistle to the Romans; and one of the great temptations under which he unconsciously labors who pauses in his reading to seek after the apostle's meaning, is to exact too much of the figure, or, to make it illustrate four things when it was only intended to illustrate one.

Figures are indispensable, and yet hardly any thing may be more easily abused, whether by being ignored or by being perverted. Take as one illustration the word "law," which occurs so often in this epistle. What is Paul's doctrine concerning the law (*nomos*)? This is a fundamental question, and the answer must be obtained chiefly from this epistle and that to the Galatians. But it can not be done unless we observe the figures in connection with which it occurs and the various senses in which it has been necessary to use it. At one time he calls the law a slave whose duty it is to lead us to Christ, as the Greek slave was required to conduct the children safely to school. At another time he speaks of the law as our Master who lords it over us in no gentle manner. Again, he speaks of the law as being holy, righteous, and good. And of the law of sin; and he says that we are free from the law; and that we are not free, but still under obligation to obey it, and again, that the law is a kind of weapon with which sin slays us; and so, a great many figures, affirmations, denials, etc., all concerning law and all in the same epistle. They are not contradictory; but if the casual reader—and most readers of the epistle are only too casual—did not forget one statement before he has reached the next, they might seem to be contradictory. As Paul speaks of law in several senses, or of the same law from several points of view, so also does he in the same manner speak of some other things; and it is quite necessary to be mindful of this when we would know his meaning in this place or that.

But such mild personifications, metaphors, and the use of the same word in different senses, are not the only figures which we find in this epistle. He speaks

of invisible things as being seen—a form of speech which the rhetoricians call oxymoron; and also of Abraham's hoping though he had no hope (iv. 18); when I am weak then I am strong. Nor should one fail to notice the frequent antitheses which characterize the epistle, between such words as "flesh" and "spirit," "law," or "works of the law," and "faith," "bondage" and "freedom," "bondmen" and "freemen," "foolishness" and "wisdom," etc. In chapter x. 13-15, Paul employs what the logicians call a regular sorites, and in various other passages logical arguments in the strictly technical sense.

In chapter vii. 1, and following verses, his argument is from analogy; in chapter vii. 9-25, from personal experience, while in various parts of the epistle he draws his arguments from the Old Testament Scriptures, using for this purpose the Greek version which was the one most accessible to his Gentile readers. His citations, however, are not made invariably for logical or argumentative purposes, but here and there for what we may call purposes of rhetoric. His style is adorned with expressions and fragments of expressions from the Old Testament, just as any writer's style may be most influenced by the book which he reads most. Thus is to be explained his apparently free and illogical use of passages from the Scriptures, and particularly his so-called rabbinical allegorizing, of which the well-known passage, Gal. iv. 22-31, is said by some to be an instance. Paul did not mean to be understood as using the story of Sarah and Hagar as an argument in the strict sense, but simply as a familiar concrete or illustrative way of stating a truth which he should otherwise have had to state in unadorned abstract terms.

It may be truly said of the style of this epistle, as of all Paul's epistles, that it is in harmony with the character and temperament of the author, with whom we have already become acquainted in the Acts. It is just such an epistle as we would expect Paul to write. It is characterized by the inward disposition, the abundant heart, the moral earnestness, of this great apostle. Its argumentative character and its warmth and rush of thought are eminently Pauline. And to these traits are due, for the most part, the digressions, parentheses, and what the grammarians call *anacalutha*, so frequent in his writings. We shall have occasion to notice these in the course of the commentary, meanwhile it is necessary only to ask the reader of the epistle to remember that as originally written it contained none of the helps to its understanding such as are employed by modern writers of treatises. It had no title page; no section headings; no indicated divisions of any sort; no intimations to the reader as to where the line of thought changes, or as to where a new phase of the subject is taken up. Such helpful acts of the book-makers were not employed by the book-makers of Paul's day. The reader was left to do his own analyzing, to detect the argument, the transitions of thought, and the aim of the whole, without the aid of previous notice, or "table of contents," furnished by the writer. As for our chapter and verse divisions of the epistle, Paul is not responsible for them, of course. They are helpful chiefly for purposes of convenient reference; but if one would understand the epistle as thoroughly as possible he should often read it at one sitting and without any notice whatever of the chapter and verse divisions.

VI.—LEADING THOUGHTS, WORDS, TEXTS.

1. The subject of the doctrinal part of the epistle is, "The Way of Human Salvation." But the discussion of this subject is introduced by an elaborate statement of the universal sinfulness and guilt of both Jew and Gentile. The epistle is, therefore, anthropological in the first place in order that it may be the more powerfully soteriological. If a universal guilt is not admitted there can be no need to prove that a universal salvation is provided. The four main thoughts of this part of the epistle may, therefore, be briefly stated as follows :

(1) All men are guilty before God. (Chapter iii. page 19.)

(2) All, therefore, need a Savior. If the Jews who have the law are in the same condition before God as the Gentiles, it would seem evident that, whatever else the law may do, it can not serve as a Savior. Therefore

(3) Christ died for all, thus providing salvation for all. Therefore, again

(4) All Christians are one body in him, there being no distinction in him between Jew and Gentile, etc.

2. Some of the leading words in the epistle are

(1) *Sin* ; in its more general sense represented by *hamartia*, in its more specific forms represented by various words.

(2) *Righteousness, justification* ; represented by the same word in the Greek, with varying shades of meaning necessary to be noticed in reading the epistle whether in the Greek or English. Sometimes the gospel plan of salvation, as distinguished from salva-

tion by works, is called God's righteousness, or rather a manifestation of God's inherent righteousness to us. Sometimes it is called the righteousness of Christ, because it was manifested in Christ. To say then that we are saved by the righteousness of Christ, is not to say that we are saved independently of a subjective change; it is to say simply that we are saved by the gospel plan and not by our special works or "deeds of the law." The subjective state into which our personal appropriation of this righteousness of Christ—or, in other words, our personal appropriation of the salvation provided through Christ—is called justification. The act of God in admitting us to terms of harmony with him because of our acceptance of the provided salvation is also called justification; it is justification as a divine act, as distinguished from justification as a human state. In this last sense justification is the same as *rightness*—the state otherwise called regeneration, a term which Paul does not use, though the thing meant is not to be regarded as absent from his teaching.

(3) *Imputing or reckoning*. By this Paul does not mean that God's righteousness or Christ-righteousness as above defined, or indeed in any sense, is imputed to us in the sense that we are really not righteous but that God only makes believe that we are. He simply means that God chooses to regard our acceptance of the offered salvation through Christ as perfectly satisfactory to him; and that we are in this case just as well-pleasing to him as if we had never been either sinful or sinners. Nor does Paul mean that God imputes Adam's sin to us whereas we are not guilty of Adam's specific sin. He simply means that God reckons or regards all men, both Jews and Gen-

tiles, as guilty because they really are guilty, not *of* Adam's sin but *because* of Adam's sin. It would have been the greatest of misfortunes to some men if God had not imputed guilt to these "some men," or in other words, if he had not thought of them as being guilty; for if he had not thought of them as being guilty he could not have thought of them as needing a Savior. This word "impute" occurs in one or more forms ten times in the fourth chapter alone.

(4) *Faith*. This also is pre-eminently a Pauline word. As a noun and verb it occurs about fifty times in the Epistle to the Romans. Paul is eminently the Apostle of Faith as contrasted with John the Apostle of Love, or Peter the Apostle of Hope, or James the Apostle of Works. It is not necessary, however, to suppose that any one of these undervalues the teachings of the others. They present different phases of the gospel. The word faith is used in various senses, the right understanding of which is essential to the right understanding of Paul. Sometimes it denotes (a) a mere act of the mind, as first, a simple acknowledgment of the truth of any thing irrespective of any allusion to evidence, or second, an acknowledgment of the truth as based on evidence; or third, an act of self-surrender to Christ and of appropriation of him as our Savior. Sometimes it denotes (b) a state or condition, as first, trust, confidence, repose in Christ, or second, fellowship and union with Christ. Sometimes it is used (c) as antithetical to works in the technical sense—that is, the ceremonial works in particular as practiced by the Jews of Paul's day. Or (d) as including works, not ceremonial, but works as including the whole sphere of the Christian life and activity; as the stream may be regarded as a part of

the fountain from which it flows. Sometimes it is used also to denote the gospel plan of salvation, as when the adherents of "the faith" are spoken of.

(5) *Law Nomos*; a word already referred to on page 32, and which will be noticed further in the commentary on passages in which it occurs.

(6) *Flesh*; in a figurative sense, not the body. The words flesh and fleshly or carnal stand in antithesis to spirit and spiritual; but when the word "spiritual" stands thus in contrast with the word "carnal," or fleshly, it should not be confounded with the word "spiritual" in contrast with the word "material;" as, a "spiritual nature," a "carnal nature," or, a "spiritual body," a "material body."

(7) *For*, the preposition; represented in the New Testament by several Greek words as *peri*, *huper*, *dia*, *anti*, etc. Christ "suffered for us," died "for us," "for our sins," "for the ungodly," the just for the unjust; in behalf of us, on account of our sins, in another's place, in the interest of another, etc. The word used here or there is determined by the aspect of the subject presented, or the person or thing spoken of. Paul uses *huper* in Romans. Prepositions and conjunctions, are small words, but they are important ones and often require the greatest care and attention.

(8) *All*. Salvation offered to all, because all need salvation.

3. *Leading texts*. Chapter iii. 9; all under sin, iii. 20; through the law comes the knowledge of sin, iii. 28; justification by faith apart from the works of the law, v. 1; being justified by faith, etc., v. 12 and 18; wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the

world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned . . . even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life, v. 20, 21; grace abounding more exceedingly than sin, vi. 11; dead unto sin, alive unto God in Christ Jesus, viii.; no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, viii. 28; all things work together for good to them that love God, viii. 29, 30; foreknowledge, foreordination, calling, justification, glorification, viii. 31; if God be for us who is against us? xi. 25; Israel's partial hardening, etc., xi. 32; all regarded as disobedient, that mercy might be offered to all, xi. 36; of him, through him, unto him, are all things, xii. 1; our bodies to be presented to God a living sacrifice, etc.

VII. TESTIMONIES CONCERNING THE EPISTLE.

It stands at the head of the Pauline epistles, not merely in length, but especially as a comprehensive, systematic, and profound discussion of the plan of human salvation. The following are the judgments of some of the greatest biblical scholars of the ages in regard to this epistle:

"It is the grandest, the boldest, and in all its depths and heights the most complete composition of the greatest apostle."—*Meyer*.

"It is the most remarkable production of the most remarkable man. . . . It is the heart of the doctrinal portion of the New Testament. It presents in systematic order the fundamental truths of Christianity in their primitive purity, inexhaustible depth, all-conquering force, and never-failing comfort. It is the

bulwark of the evangelical doctrines of sin and grace."—*Schaff*.

"It is the cathedral of the Christian faith.

The true understanding of this masterpiece of the apostolic mind is reserved for those who approach it with the heart described by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount—the heart hungering and thirsting after righteousness. For what is the Epistle to the Romans? The offer of the *righteousness of God* to the man who finds himself stripped by the law of his *own righteousness* (i. 17). To understand such a book we must yield ourselves to the current of the intention under which it was dictated."—*Godet*.

"It is the chief part of the New Testament and the purest gospel, well worthy to be committed to memory word for word by every Christian man, and to be pondered daily and employed as the daily bread of the soul. It can never be too often nor too well read and considered, and the more it is understood the better it tastes."—*Luther*.

"It is the most profound work in existence."—*Cole-ridge*.

"Throughout the discussion, constant reference is made to law and justice; and this is characteristic of the epistle. . . . Rome was the city of imperial law, and the great seat of jurisprudence and government. It was therefore fitting that to Jews and Gentiles residing there should be addressed this demonstration of the position of mankind, as transgressors condemned by divine law and justice, and unable by deeds to justify themselves. The world centered at ancient Rome; and in a letter sent to Rome was the whole world proved and pronounced to have been guilty before God. . . . The question which

presses is that of justification, and no one can interpret the epistle who does not keep this before his mind."—*Fraser*.

Canon Farrar calls attention to the fact that the phrase "in Christ" occurs thirty-three times in this epistle, and the phrase "justification by faith" only three or four times, and thinks the former much better expresses the essence of Paul's evangelical theology than the latter.

"A grand summary of the doctrine and practice of Christianity."—*Conybeare*.

"It must not, however, be considered that the whole of the Christian faith, or even of the Pauline conception of Christianity, is developed in this epistle. This is only treated as it bears on the relation of God to man—the fall of man and his redemption through Christ."—*Gloag*.

Other topics, as the nature of God, the person and dignity of Christ, the Church, etc., are discussed in other epistles.

The ancient Chrysostom was accustomed to have this epistle read through to him twice every week. 'Melancthon copied it twice with his own hand word for word in order that he might the more thoroughly imbibe its spirit and teaching. Dr. James Morrison says, in speaking of his own experience, that going from the din, and strife, and worry of the outer world to the study of Paul is like entering a spiritual university—a home for the heart—Paul is both inspired and inspiring.

"O Christianity, had thy one work been to produce a St. Paul, that alone should have rendered thee dear to the coldest reason."—*Sailer*. And Godet, in quoting these words, adds: "And thou, O St. Paul, had

thy one work been to compose an Epistle to the Romans, that alone should have rendered thee dear to every sound reason."

"*Quid est enim Paulo rarius.* What is rarer than Paul?"—*Melanchthon.*

CHAPTER III.

The Teachings of the Epistle.

The Epistle is readily divided into two parts, the Doctrinal, chapters i.-xi., and the Practical, chapters xii.-xvi. The doctrinal portion, however, is preceded by the Salutation and Introduction, verses 1-15. Before proceeding with our sketch of the teachings of the epistle, it may be well to present the analysis somewhat more in detail.

I. THE LINE OF THOUGHT.

I.

SUPERScription, vs. 1-7.

Paul, To all that be in Rome, Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

II.

INTRODUCTION, vs. 8-15.

1. He thanks God for the faith of the Roman Christians.

2. Expresses to them his earnest desire to make them a personal visit.

III.

THE FUNDAMENTAL THEME, vs. 16, 17.

The gospel, that is the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, is the power of God unto salvation to both Jews and Gentiles.

IV.

THE ARGUMENT,

Or the fundamental theme unfolded and proved (ch. i. 18; xi.).

1. *First Proposition.*

The universal need of salvation, or righteousness, ch. i. 18; iii. 20. (1) In the case of the Gentiles; (2) in the case of the Jews, who were no less guilty, and under condemnation, notwithstanding their greater light and theocratic privileges.

2. *Second Proposition.*

The universal offer of this salvation, or righteousness, on condition of faith in Jesus Christ, by whose atoning work it became possible for God to make the offer (ch. iii. 21; v. 11).

3. *Third Proposition.*

Adam and Christ. To the one is to be traced our condemnation and death; to the other is to be ascribed our justification and life (v. 12-21).

At this point in his argument Paul anticipates certain objections which might be made against his doctrine as thus far set forth.

4. *First Objection.*

Paul's doctrine seems to promote sin; it furnishes no ground for holiness of life. It would seem that we might rather continue in sin that this free grace might abound (vi. 1).

5. *Answer.*

Sin destroyed; justification by grace through faith promotes holiness of life (vi. 2-14).

6. Second Objection.

Is not the law discredited? If we are free from the law and under grace, may we not sin as much as it may please us? (vi. 15.)

7. Answer.

The objection shown to be based upon an erroneous apprehension of what is meant when it is said that by grace we are freed from the law (vi. 16-23). Paul, in continuation of his answer to the objections, sets forth at some length the true spiritual function of the law (vii. 1-25). He concludes by re-affirming that Christ, and not the law, is both our justification and our sanctification—that is, it is He who frees us from the condemnation of the law and enables us to live holy lives (viii.).

8. Third Objection.

What about the Israelites? Are they not the elect, covenant people? And does not this doctrine which makes salvation, whether of them or of the Gentiles, a matter of grace, attribute unfaithfulness to God, by making void his ancient covenant promise?

9. Answer.

This objection, which, in the estimation of the Jew, was certainly a very formidable one, Paul, who affirms himself to be a true and faithful Jew, answers at length in chapters ix., x., xi., and concludes by exultingly declaring that this divine treatment of Jew and Gentile, instead of being a proof of unfairness and unfaithfulness on the part of God, is really an exhibition of the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

This concludes the doctrinal part of the epistle.

V.

PRACTICAL.

The practical holiness, or right living, which has its root in the doctrine of salvation as set forth in the preceding chapters, "I beseech you *therefore*" (xii. 1).

1. *Consecration of the Whole Life.*

This consecration is the necessary starting point of the new life, and based on a true and healthy view of ourselves and of our position, and should manifest itself in the Christian's relation both to the Church and to the world (ch. xii.).

2. *The Christian and the State (xiii.).*

3. *Concerning Things Indifferent (xiv.-xv. 7).*

4. *Paul Again Adverts, but in Less Argumentative Tone, to the Oneness of Attitude of Jew and Gentile to the Common Gospel (xv. 8-33).*

5. *Personal Messages (xvi.).*

A description more in detail of Paul's doctrinal and ethical teachings as set forth in this epistle, and as understood by the present writer, is presented in the two following sections. The doctrinal portion is the more difficult; but if we will study it carefully, and with constant reference to its fundamental theme, as above stated, and in constant recognition of our dependence upon the enlightening help of the Holy Spirit, we shall, doubtless, not err in our apprehension of its main thoughts and of their relation one to another. It was not intended that the epistle should be an enigma to us, nor was it intended that it should be regarded as a scrappy letter. It is a profound epistle because it deals with its subject in a manner

with which the human mind in Paul's day was an utter stranger; one to which the heathen mind, whatever other views it may have about salvation, is still a stranger; one which the human heart in its natural condition, however much it may be enlightened in other respects, is loath to accept; and one which even the Church, in some of its branches especially, has not invariably seen with such clearness of vision as to duly emphasize its fundamental teaching. Luther was in a certain true sense the second Paul who wrote the epistle to "the Romans;" and to this day all Christians do by no means agree as to the exact place occupied by what they all call "works," in the plan of human salvation.

II.—PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION.

Only he who recognizes himself as sick, as a captive, or as lost, can recognize his need of a physician, a deliverer, or of one who can conduct him to the desired way. Only he who has truly descended to the recognition of himself as a guilty and condemned sinner, can ascend to the recognition of Christ as the only Savior. The true doctrine concerning salvation is based, therefore, on the true doctrine concerning man as a sinner; or, as the theologians might say, the Pauline soteriology rests on the preceding Pauline anthropology. And this, of course, is the natural and logical order.

I. Paul begins his discussion with an explicit announcement of his own doctrine of salvation in the fewest words (chapter i. 16, 17). Underlying this, however, is the assumption which none of his readers would deny, that the question of questions with every

rational human being is, How shall man be just before God? Or, in other words, How shall man be placed in a state of harmony with God? The question admitted of three answers:

First. By glorifying God as God; worshiping him and not the creature; living in harmony with the truth in so far as revealed in nature and the human heart.

This was the answer which the Gentile, or non-Jewish people, might have given to the question. Paul makes no objection to it. On the contrary he tacitly admits the correctness in the abstract of this theory of salvation, and severely arraigns the Gentiles because they did not live in harmony with it. He draws a truthful and dark picture of the current Gentile life, showing that it was the farthest possible remove from the requirement of the theory. They had the knowledge of God to begin with, but they did not retain it; they grossly perverted it. Instead of worshiping God in spirit and in truth, they worshiped him in the form of idols and images of corruptible things; and so on through the fearful list of specifications in chapter i. 24-32. This picture was true, is true, and has ever been true, of the heathen life as a whole, however many individual exceptions there may have been to it. The trouble with this theory is, not that it is false in itself, for Paul himself expressly affirms in this immediate connection (ii. 6-10) that God will render to every man according to his deeds; on the one hand, to those who by patient continuance, etc., eternal life; and on the other to those who live unrighteous lives, indignation and wrath; but the fault of this first answer is, it is not practicable; as a theory of salvation the facts show that in its relation

to the vast heathen or Gentile mass of mankind it does not work well. The world lies in darkness and sin.

Second. The Jew's answer. The fact that we have been called by God's own sovereign choice, as the seed of Abraham through Isaac, into covenant relation with him, and the implied observance on our part of the covenant law, is itself the pledge of our harmony with God, or, in other words, of our salvation. And the only way for the Gentile to have a like salvation is for him to become a Jew through the prescribed formulas of proselytism.

The objection to this answer lay not in the answer itself, but in the Jew's misapprehension of its true meaning; as is shown in the fact that while the Jew may have observed the letter of the formal law ever so strictly, he nevertheless did those things which are charged against the Gentiles and, more than that, had pleasure in others who did them. This, of itself, was sufficient evidence that the Jew was not in harmony with God, or, in other words, had not attained to salvation; for no Jew who had rightly read the Old Testament, and who therefore had a conscience not dead to moral distinctions, would suppose for a moment that the God of the Old Testament could look with approbation on the doers of such things as they did. Hence, the Jews also must be regarded as under condemnation, and the theory of salvation as interpreted by them must be regarded as a failure.

Third. Paul's answer. Harmony with God, or righteousness, or justification, or salvation, as it may be variously called, is a gift of grace offered alike to all men, whether Jew or Gentile, and which may become the personal possession of any man, simply by an act

of cordial appropriation of it, which act is called faith in its narrowest sense, and its ultimate ground and object, of course, is Christ. This is elsewhere called "the new and living way" to be saved. Not because it had not in a certain sense always been the only way; not because it was essentially and totally different from the way furnished through that inner law which Paul says the Gentiles were unto themselves; not that it was essentially different from the way or mode of salvation that was in operation in the case of Abraham and all the Old Testament peoples, and which the Jews of Paul's time grossly misapprehended and perverted; but new because it was the revival of an obsolete doctrine, and living because it secured life. Paul sets forth the fundamental relation of Christ to this salvation in chapter iii. 24, 26. He is a "*propitiation*;" that is to say, He it was who rendered it morally possible for God—not *to be* propitious toward us—but to *manifest* his propitiousness toward us by offering us pardon, or the removal of the sentence of condemnation. This "propitiatory" act of Christ, however, was one that lay wholly between him and God the Father; for, as we said, its intended effect was to render it morally possible—not for God *to be* propitious, for he was always and intrinsically propitious, but to *manifest* his propitiousness in our pardon or justification, and so far as this intended effect of what Christ did is concerned, *it* would have been accomplished, whether any man had ever possessed the least knowledge of the historic Christ or not. Paul does not say this in the passage above referred to, nor indeed in so many words elsewhere; but he implies it, as appears from his attitude toward what we called above the first answer to the question, How shall man be justified or

saved? In order that Christ might render it possible for God to manifest his propitiousness, or pardoning grace, toward the Gentiles, it was not necessary for the Gentiles to know that he had done it, for it was already done before the fact was ever announced to the world; and all that was now necessary in order that this possible propitiousness of God might become actual in its relation to man was (1) That man should be caused to know not merely that God is inherently of a propitious or loving and gracious nature, but that there is no reason on his part why he may not manifest himself as such to sinful man. Hence, the emphatic announcement at the outset, and, in one form or another, often repeated afterward, that Christ is our "propitiation," or the basis of our hope of mercy, or our "mercy-seat"—for these varying forms of expression are not really changes of idea but only of the figure.

The second (2) thing necessary in order that the propitiousness, which Christ has made it possible for God to manifest toward us, may be actually manifested toward us is, what in the above-mentioned passage (iii. 25), and often elsewhere, Paul calls "faith in his blood," or faith in him, or simply faith; which faith necessarily implies a humble and contrite spirit, a penitential recognition of our worthiness of condemnation, and a penitential desire to live in harmony with the law of right, which is the law of God, and in the case of those who know Christ historically it also implies a grateful and penitential recognition of what he has done to render it possible for God to exhibit toward us his inherent propitiousness in so far as to remove all condemnation. But in the case of those who did not know Christ historically, or in other words had no knowledge of his propitiatory work, all that was nec-

essary to their salvation was the disposition toward sin on the one hand and God on the other, which the word faith implies, but it would not have been sufficient had not Christ been a propitiation. But the charge which Paul makes against both Jew and Gentile is that they were utterly without this disposition, as was clearly shown by their wicked lives. Any other view than this would seem to sever the plan of salvation preached by Paul from the plan of salvation revealed in the Old Testament—which Paul repeatedly declared he was not doing. So far as his relation to his own people was concerned his gospel was really an elaborate attempt on his part to bring back to the old paths the wandering Jew.

And this provided salvation is as universal as sin and sin is as universal as the race. Nor need those, who by faith made it their salvation actually, have any fear as to its final certainty; for through the suffering discipline to which we are subjected and the suffering and ever faithful mediation of Him who died for the ungodly, we have a hope which shall never be disappointed; for if Christ would die for the ungodly, so also will he ever thereafter pledge his faithfulness to those who enter into the life of fellowship with him.

2. In so far as the "foolish heart" of the Gentiles was not utterly darkened and indifferent to such matters, it was in despair. So no opposition would come from the Gentiles to Paul's exposition of the way to be saved, or of the way to attain unto true righteousness. It was the Jew whose objections Paul had to meet.

(1) The first of these objections, which Paul represents as being addressed to him is: Does not your exposition of the nature of salvation and of the way

whereby it is to be attained, remove all ground for holiness of life? Does it not rather promote sin by encouraging us to do evil that good may come, or in order that grace may have only the greater opportunity to be manifested toward us? (vi. 1.)

“By no means,” says Paul (vi. 2); and he proceeds in the following verses to show that he who represents him as so teaching greatly misapprehends and perverts his meaning. This righteousness, he says, which is a gift of grace, and which becomes ours by faith, or by our identifying ourselves in spirit with Christ, is in its very nature antagonistic to lawlessness. Another name for this gift of grace is spiritual life, and another name for sin or lawlessness is spiritual death; and he who is spiritually alive can not at the same time be spiritually dead. The very fact that we have come into possession of this gift implies in its very nature that we are dead to sin, and of course therefore it is impossible for us to be dead to sin and at the very same time show that we are still alive to sin by still living in sin. Or in other words, as this righteousness by faith consists in the perfect union of ourselves with Christ, we are obliged to share his disapprobation of sin, and to live in spirit, at least, just such a life as he lives—which is not our old one of sin or lawlessness. Paul represents this coming into possession of righteousness which is a gift of grace, this transition from the old life of sin or lawlessness to the new life of spiritual obedience in Christ, under a variety of figures. It is a transition from death to resurrection, our old selves having been crucified, our new selves being the risen ones which have no more affinity for sin. It is also represented as being a transition from a state of bondage,

sin being the master to whom we gave up our members, to a state of freedom from sin's mastery but of enslavement to the service of God. The same thought is presented in the reference to the marriage law (vii. 1f.) which binds a woman to her husband so long only as he lives. The relation between sin and ourselves is dissolved, so that we are no longer under sin's law, whether sin be regarded as a master or as a husband.

Thus does Paul refute the charge of the Jew that his theory of human righteousness instead of securing human righteousness really encouraged human lawlessness; and thus does he at the same time lay firmly the foundation of the true doctrine of sanctification, or morality, or holiness of life, as it may be variously called: this foundation being the fact that it is a self-contradiction in the very nature of the case, to say that one who is dead to sin may continue to approve a life of sin.

(2) Another objection which the Jew is represented as making is: "What of the law?" he says. "If we can attain to righteousness apart from the works of the law, is not the value of the law depreciated? It would seem that its only tendency is to provoke us to sin." (vi. 7.)

This objection to Paul's teaching causes him to set forth the true function of the law which the Jew obviously misapprehends. Paul does not discredit the law. It does provoke to sin, for the very fact that one is forbidden to do a thing does arouse in him a desire to do that thing, and a desire to which he only too often yields. But this is not the fault of the law; it simply shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Why should I desire most of all to do that which is for-

bidden simply because it is forbidden? The evil principle is within me whether there be any law in existence or not. But if there be a law, and if it be known by me, it simply enables me to know myself as a sinner. When I had not the law I was a sinner and did not know it—that is, sin in me was dormant, or was dead and I was alive, or thought I was; but when I had the law sin that was in me showed that it was only dormant and I myself was dead. Hence, all that the law can do, and all that it was intended to do, is to plunge me into a state of conscious separation from God, and thereby neither justify me nor sanctify me, but enable me to realize my need of both justification and sanctification. Indeed, the more I—that is, any man whether regenerate or unregenerate—endeavor to shake off the yoke which sin by means of the law has put upon me the more galling and intolerable do I find its weight to be. This is the conflict described in the last half of chapter vii.; and it never ceases. It continues through life side by side with the experience described in the next chapter. My sanctification or holiness does not come by means of the law; it can never so come. It comes apart from my relation to the law. It consists in my being in Christ Jesus—walking, living day by day, according to the spirit and not according to the flesh. I—that is, my real self, live according to whichever I approve. And so after all, it is not I who sin. My spirit is in union with His Spirit. This is my sanctification. Notwithstanding the incessant conflict, what shall I fear? Nothing. Not God, not Christ, not tribulation, not separation from Christ, not any thing; for God hath determined that I should be conformed to the image of his Son.

3. But to the Jew there was yet another obstacle in the way of his acceptance of Paul's phase of the doctrine concerning salvation, and to the Jew it was a very grave one. It was his doctrine concerning the election of Israel. He misapprehended Paul because he misapprehended the true view of God's choice of Israel. God is absolute sovereign, that is true; and so the Jew thought that the Jew believed. But after all, in reality he did not so believe. Paul did, and hence he believed that in the exercise of his absolute sovereignty he might also elect to save the Gentiles, at least some Gentiles—all who were sincerely seeking after him if haply they might find him. He might in the exercise of his absolute sovereignty even determine to reject Israel as his people and elect for himself a new people out of the Gentiles. If he had sovereignly chosen one of Isaac's sons and his descendants to be his people, and not chosen the other, could he not in this case also exercise, if he should deem it best, a like sovereignty? Had he not even in the days of Moses, declared with the utmost emphasis that his sovereignty was a free sovereignty, bound by no law extraneous to himself, bound by no law save his own holy will or nature? Had he not, long after Israel had become his elect people, threatened them plainly through Moses with summary rejection, saying that his sovereignty was such that he was perfectly free to extend this electing mercy to whom he would and to withhold it from whom he would? Even so now he could sovereignly elect to save Gentiles.

So the Jew's misapprehension of his relation to God, which he regarded as a guaranty of his salvation, was based upon another twofold misapprehension, first of

the nature of salvation or righteousness, and second of the nature of the divine sovereignty. And both these misapprehensions were founded in the first place on a false reading of the Old Testament Scriptures. Had he not expressly said that as the potter chooses one piece of clay and rejects another, the reason not necessarily being apparent to any one but the potter, so also could he choose one people and reject another. Why should the Jews interpret this to mean that God chose them and rejected the Gentiles and that he could not choose the Gentiles and reject them? Was not this to deny or limit the divine sovereignty rather than to affirm it? It would seem so; for a sovereign who can not revoke his choice or reverse it, when the conditions upon which it was made no longer exist, is not really an absolute sovereign. God's election of Israel has never gotten beyond God's control. And had he not expressly said by the mouth of one whom the Jews regarded as one of his prophets, "I will call that my people which was not my people?" What could this mean but that he would call the Gentiles his people, and in a more explicit sense than had hitherto been done? From all which it should seem evident that God had not by any irrevocable decree debarred the Gentiles from that righteousness which consisted, so to speak, in the absorption by faith of God's own righteous character, and which alone constituted the salvation of the Jew, and that by reason of the very nature of this righteousness which constituted his salvation, it could not be necessary for the Gentile, in order that he might possess it, to pass through a process of Jewish proselytism.

4. The discussion of the Jewish attitude toward this subject gives Paul occasion to do two things:

(1) To set forth (chapter x.) the divinely intended relation of the Jews—his own dearly beloved people—toward the Gentiles. The more we read Paul the more we are struck either with his inspiration or his profound insight into the teachings both of the Old Testament and of Jesus in the Gospels—profound insight because so utterly opposed to the most deep-seated and cherished prejudices of the Jews, he himself being a Jew and having been a Pharisee of the strictest sect. The true spirit of the teaching of the Old Testament, which the Jew could not consistently regard as offensive, was that the supreme fact in regard to Israel was, not that he was to be the exclusive people of God in any literal and national sense, but that he was to occupy toward the Gentiles a missionary relation; he was to be a light-bearer to them; he was to be a witness of God to them, bearing witness as to how even the Gentiles also may be saved and must be saved if saved at all. This only way of being saved can not in the very nature of the case admit of any distinction between Jew and Gentile—between one man and another. It is like the physician's medicine, which if it is good for an Englishman is, under like circumstances good for a German. Righteousness is righteousness; the Lord is the same Lord. That which he condemns in the Gentile he can not approve in the Jew. Christ is Lord, and whosoever, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, whosoever the wide world over, calleth on the name of the Lord, as the Jew's own scriptures teach, shall be saved. But would there not be more calling upon God, more penitential hungering and thirsting after his righteousness, if men only knew of God—only knew of his righteousness and the fact that it might in some sense be

transmitted into their own natures, making them the sons of God, in the likeness of God, in unison with God? But how can they know this unless they know Him who is the revealer of God and his righteousness? And how can they know Him unless they be told? And who is there to tell them but the Jew? Or, in other words, him who already knows, whoever he may be. "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things." But if Israel would neither accept the message nor be the bearer of it to others, then they who were called God's people should no longer be his people, and through agencies of his own providing those who had not been called his people should become his people. And this in turn should at last prove to be a blessing to Israel by provoking her to jealousy. It is not God's purpose to cast off Israel. The gospel having proceeded from Israel is to return to Israel, and it is God's purpose to so exercise his loving and unrestricted sovereignty as to give salvation as an actual possession to all, whether Jew or Gentile, who sincerely call upon his name, and to those who were historically acquainted with the crucified and risen Jesus, calling on his name and calling on the name of the Lord were one and the same thing. They could never clearly and fully know the Lord until they knew him as Christ.

III.—THE ETHICAL TEACHING.

The manner of life, in our relation to God, to one another, and to the State, which should naturally grow out of Paul's theory of salvation, is presented in chapters xii. and following. Instead of being one of evil doing and lawlessness, as the Jew supposed, it was in all respects the very opposite. We have

space here for only a very brief consideration of Paul's teaching on this subject.

1. *The Basis.* "I beseech you THEREFORE, brethren," etc. This word "therefore" links Paul's practical ethics with his doctrine of salvation. Being saved consisted in being "transformed," an inward renewal, having God's righteousness in us, or in other words still, in having Christ in us. It is in this that our character, or spiritual life, consists. This is the Pauline basis of ethics. The outer life is to be the manifestation of the inner Christ, a continual setting forth of the perfect will of God, as the water in the stream illustrates the character of the fountain from which it flows. Such a life, therefore, as his theory called for could not be otherwise than one of entire consecration to God, non-conformity to the world as being the antithesis of God; theoretically perfect, however practically imperfect it might be by reason of ingredients which fall into it by the way, and which did not come from the fountain.

2. *Our Relation to God.* This inward consecration becomes outwardly devoted service to God in whatever sphere his providence may have placed us; and all our acts are to receive that quality which renders them acceptable to God from the spirit of the Christ within us, from which spirit our acts proceed. If we serve God reluctantly in this or that prescribed capacity it is not God's service, because the manner of service which proceeds from the Christ within us is not a reluctant service. This Christ within us becomes our character, and it is our character which determines the quality of our service.

3. *Our Relations to one Another.* Here again our manner of life is to receive its moral tone and quality from the Christ dwelling in us, as the fruit receives its quality of sweetness, or bitterness, or sourness, from the juice which pervades it. Paul's teaching on this subject in the last half of chapter xii. is only an expansion of the thought which he expresses elsewhere: Let that mind or disposition be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. If Christ's disposition be in us that is the disposition which will also determine our manner of life toward others. We may infer his mind from his life. He might, when he was persecuted, have taken vengeance into his own hands, but he did not do it. When he was reviled he did not revile back again. He did not return evil for evil. He did not bear himself haughtily, thinking of himself more highly than he ought to think. He was meek, patient, and forgiving. If Christ be perfectly formed within us, so shall our manner of life be identical with his, for from the same fountain can not come two different streams.

4. *Our Relation to the State* (chap. xiii.). The principle which Paul lays down for the guidance of the Roman Christians in their relations to the Roman government is also of universal obligation: Let every soul submit himself to the government which is over him. Why? Because government is ordained of God, just as the family is, and the Church. God is a God of order, not of confusion and anarchy. Christians can not be Christ-like without being God-like, and they can not be God-like without loving order. But there can be no social order where there is no social organism—a renunciation of some

individual rights, and the recognition of the authority of law. If the government in any particular instance happens to be a bad one in any respect, submit to it, for even a bad government is better than to have every man set out for himself, and for himself alone. If the government commands you to do what is morally wrong, still submit to it, not by obeying its commands, but by quietly submitting to its punishment. Government is ordained of God, but any particular form of administration may be changed, not by substituting lawlessness, but by introducing in the place of the bad a better form. The difference is great between the anarchist and him who, while he resists the government, at the same time recognizes the universal binding force of social law, and if need be bows in meek submission to its penalty.

5. *In Relation to Things Indifferent.* Two things are here to be accomplished—first, a test or criterion must be furnished whereby to determine what acts are indifferent; second, to exercise a spirit of charity toward one another in regard to these matters.

Of course, in the estimation both of Jew and Gentile, if there should be an agreement that a given act or course of conduct is morally neither right nor wrong, there could no longer be any dispute about it. Hence, in order to appreciate the teachings of Paul on this subject (chap. xiv.) it is necessary to read what he says in the light of the important principle which he has already established in a former part of his epistle. This principle may be stated in a variety of forms, as (1) Morality in the strict and true sense is spiritual, something that inheres in and proceeds

from our character; the act, therefore, deriving its so-called moral character from the character of him who performs it; or (2) Morality is not something which can be made or unmade by the deliverances of an ecclesiastical authority, but is something immutable; or (3) Unto the pure are all things pure, even meats or wines offered to idols; or (4) Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. The Christian's conscience is determined by the Christian's character; and the Christian's character is only another name for the Christ, or divine righteousness in him. Whatsoever, therefore, the Christian can not do with a good conscience it is wrong for him to do, though not wrong for another who can do it with an approving conscience. The question, therefore, which every one is to ask is not, Is it wrong to eat meat? Is it wrong to dance? Is it wrong to have Church fairs for the purpose of raising money? etc., but, Is it wrong for *me* to do so? And this is a question which every person must determine for himself in the light of his own conscience and in view of his individual responsibility to God—for it is in his relation to God and not to his fellow that every man must stand or fall.

But in its applications to our daily lives the principle as laid down by Paul is also according to him to be under the modifying influence of Christian charity. All things may be lawful for me, but all things may not be expedient, whereas you may regard them as *both* in their relation to you. And in regard to these debatable questions no Christian is to make his judgment the standard of another's conduct. One may esteem it right to do this or that, and another may esteem it wrong; but let each be persuaded in his own mind, and act accordingly. The Christian who

regards himself as strong, able to do with a good conscience that which another's conscience will not allow him to do, should respect the scruples of his weaker brother, making no attempt to induce him to act in opposition to his conscience. And if his example in doing these debatable things should be a source of temptation to the weak one, then for the sake of his brother's infirmities of conscience he should be willing to deny himself and refrain from doing them.

Paul does not mean, however, that one is the absolute keeper of another's conscience, or, in other words, that the weakness of the weak is an absolute law unto the strong. If the strong are to respect the weakness of the weak, so are these latter to respect the strength of the strong. The virtue of a charitable and liberal spirit is not to be so pressed as to involve the sacrifice of all liberty. The conscience of neither party is to be the slave of the conscience of the other. "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more," is a precept addressed no less to the weak than to the strong. If I, for reasons satisfactory to me, should deem it best to act in opposition to my brother's conscience, Paul's teaching allows me the liberty of so doing. If Paul himself had not acted according to this teaching it is not likely that he could ever have been an apostle to the Gentiles. Jewish scruples were not very favorable to his ministry, especially; and it was his privilege, in the exercise of his strong liberty, and of his broad Christian charity toward those who differed with him in these matters of casuistry, to do more than any other apostle toward removing such harmful prejudices from the way of the gospel.

COMMENTARY.

I.

THE PREFACE.

Verses 1-15.

(1. Superscription, vs. 1-7; 2. Introduction, vs. 8-15.)

It was the custom of ancient letter writers to sign their names at the beginning of the letter, and not at the end as we do, thus, "A. B. to C. D.;" and then, instead of saying "Dear Friend" or "Dear Sir," the Greeks said, "A. B. to C. D. Wishes Joy;" the Romans, "A. B. to C. D. Wishes Health;" and the Jews, "A. B. to C. D. Wishes Peace." Paul combines the classical and Jewish forms, giving a higher meaning to both, and writes, "Wishes Grace and Peace," or, "Grace to you and Peace," often adding the further words, "From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Compare the superscription here with that of each of Paul's other epistles. He does not sign his name simply "Paul," as in the first and second Thessalonians, the first which he wrote, but usually writes it officially, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ," "Paul, a servant of Christ," etc. He here includes in his salutation an expression of warm personal sympathy for the Christians at Rome, many of whom were, doubtless, old personal friends whom he had drawn to him at Ephesus and other parts of the Roman world.

Chap. I., v. 1:—*Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.*

Verse 1. **Paul.** See on this name, Introduction, p. 1. **A servant.** Bondman, or slave, as the word *doulos* here rendered always means. The word servant is admissible, provided, we think, not of a hired servant, nor of a servant in the sense in which *diakonos*, or deacon, is rendered in chap. xvi. 1, and elsewhere. Perhaps many or even all the Christians to whom Paul here writes were made familiar by painful experience with the meaning of this word which denoted a Roman slave. There were hundreds of thousands of them in the great city at the time when Paul was writing this epistle, and millions more in other parts of the empire. The Roman master had the power of life and death over his slave, and no matter how arbitrarily and cruelly he might use this power, he was accountable neither to the slave nor to the government. That Paul, in whose veins flowed not one drop of the obsequious blood, should have uniformly applied such a term to himself, shows how absolute and intense was his allegiance to Christ. He regarded himself not as his own but as Christ's property, as truly as if he had been literally bought with a price. He was, therefore, under bounden obligation to Christ; though it is by no means implied that he regarded his master as a hard one. **Jesus Christ.** This form of expression means Jesus who is the Messiah; it identifies Jesus of Nazareth with the Christ or Messiah, and this Paul must have meant to do. The form "Christ Jesus" would have meant the Messiah who is Jesus. With us the forms are practically equivalent, though they were not originally so,

for the one ascribed divinity to Jesus, while the other ascribed a lowly humanity to the Christ. The humanity of Jesus was evident, but his divinity was not. ***Called to be an Apostle.*** A man may be called *to be* a Christian and yet not actually be one, for he may resist the Spirit's call. Paul means that he is an apostle, not by self-appointment, not by human appointment, but by the call of Christ, as were the other apostles. It is this fact that is to give his words official weight with those to whom he writes. The word "apostle" denotes the special form of service to which Paul was called by Christ. The apostles were the servants to whom it was intrusted to found the Christian Church; the evangelists extended it by securing converts, while the pastors and teachers strengthened and otherwise contributed to its perfecting by their special labors. The man who was an apostle in this special sense might also combine in himself the function of the others; but when the evangelists are also called apostles the word must be understood in an unofficial sense. ***Separated.*** Separated by Christ from all other vocations, and set apart by him to his apostolic work. Paul does not refer here to any human consecration nor to an eternal election of himself to his office and work as an apostle, but rather regards all the circumstances of his life culminating in his conversion as a providential leading thereto; see Gal. i. 15. ***Unto the gospel of God.*** Unto the work of preaching the good tidings, not concerning God, but concerning Christ, and of which glad tidings God is the author. See verse 3.

V. 2. ***Promised.*** God had not merely promised

V. 2:—*Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures.*

V. 3:—*Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.*

and caused the promises to be recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures that there should at sometime be glad tidings, but he had also promised that these glad tidings should be preached to the Gentiles also; and we think that it is these latter promises that Paul here has especially in mind, for he was pre-eminently an apostle to the Gentiles, and refers to the promises in immediate connection with his own work. Paul's Jewish critics, with whom he will have much to do before he concludes the epistle, might therefore see in this verse allusion to the well-known Jewish attitude toward the Gentiles in respect to the matter of being saved.

V. 3. *Concerning his Son.* That is, the preaching of the gospel concerning his Son. The Revised Version omits the words, "Jesus Christ our Lord," but inserts them in verse 4, so that in neither case is there any doubt as to who "his Son" is. *Made of the seed of David according to the flesh.* Whether we regard Mary only or both Joseph and Mary, as descended from David, the words here rendered do not imply that Paul believed Jesus' body and human nature to be of the seed or race of David in the same sense that Joseph or Mary was—that is, by ordinary generation. The words are quite consistent with Paul's belief, as elsewhere expressed, in the immaculate conception on the part of Mary by the Holy Ghost; and the words "was made," are in the

V. 4:—*And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*

Greek "was born" or "became"—that is, the pre-existent Son of God *became* human and in doing so attached himself to the race of David by being born of Mary a descendant of David.

V. 4. *Declared to be the Son of God.* We must understand the word "declared" to carry with it here the additional sense of *proven to be*. **With power.** Not the Son of God endowed with power as contrasted with his weakness as the seed of the woman as mentioned in the preceding verse. He was declared and proven in a powerful manner to be the Son of God. The proof here referred to is his resurrection from the dead. *According to the spirit of holiness.* As he was of the seed of David in respect to the flesh, so was he declared and proven to be the Son of God in respect to the spirit of holiness. There were two sides, or parts, or natures, so to speak, to Christ's being. In the one consisted his humanity, in the other his divinity, or divine nature, here called his "spirit of holiness," because as the Son of God he was essentially spirit as God is, and also essentially holy as God is. The expression does not, therefore, we think, mean the Holy Spirit, though he did descend and rest upon Christ. Christ himself is elsewhere in the New Testament spoken of as "the Spirit," and the "eternal Spirit" (1 Tim. iii. 16; Heb. ix. 14), but the Holy Spirit, or third Person of the Trinity, is never spoken of as "the spirit of holiness."

V. 5:—*By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.*

V. 5. **By whom.** In the sense of, from whom, or through whom. Christ having risen from the dead and thereby established his oft-repeated assertion that he was the Son of God, we (that is, Paul) have received grace and apostleship. But if Jesus had not thus established himself to be the Son of God, Paul could not have received this from him, because he could not have believed him to be other than an impostor, one who had gathered about him a few disciples, attracted a momentary attention, and at last been crucified. As we learn both from the Acts and from his Epistles, Paul always regarded the resurrection of Jesus, to which he himself could personally testify, as a fact of fundamental importance. It proved that Jesus was all that he claimed to be; and hence in Paul's estimation to admit and acquiesce in the resurrection was to admit and acquiesce in the whole gospel. "He was raised for our justification," says Paul, because if he had not been raised we would not have believed on him, and hence there could have been no justification through faith in him. See also chapter x. 9.

Grace and apostleship. By this Paul means all that he was as a converted and renewed man and all that he was officially. It is a second affirmation that he received his apostleship not from man, not from the Church, but directly from Christ.

For obedience to the faith. The end, or purpose, for which the "grace and apostleship" had been conferred was that the gospel might be preached among all the Gentiles and that they might thereby

V. 6:—*Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:*

V. 7:—*To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

attain to that obedience which consists not merely in the single initial act of faith but also and especially in the life or habit of faith. ***For his name.*** In behalf of, or for the sake of his name. The gospel is preached among the Gentiles, and they are won to the obedience which consists in faith, for his name's sake, or for the promotion of the honor and glory of Christ's name.

V. 6. ***Among whom are ye also.*** The apostle tells the Romans that they also are included among the nations, or Gentiles, to whom it was his especial apostolic privilege to publish the gospel; as he was by call of Christ the apostle to the Gentiles, so the Romans were by call of Christ a part of his great flock. This same authority which made it his duty to address them made it their duty to hear him. The expression, however, may also include the further meaning that those to whom Paul was writing were already members of the Church of Christ.

V. 7. ***To all that be in Rome.*** This verse refers back to verse 1, and concludes the superscription of the letter. "Paul . . . to all that be at Rome," etc. Compare this with the mode of address employed by Paul in his other epistles. He addressed the Corinthians, Thessalonians, and Galatians, as Churches. The population of Rome at this time was between one and two millions, and the Christians gathered there were doubtless also very numerous,

and were not as yet organized into a definite church, or into a number of separate churches. *Called to be saints.* That is, saints by call, as Paul was an apostle by call. The word "saints" is used to designate those who are now commonly called Christians, and denotes those who are by profession set apart or consecrated to the service of Christ. Christians were first called Christians at Antioch about twelve years before Paul wrote this epistle, but the word does not seem to have come into general use at this time; at least, it does not occur but three times in the New Testament, twice in the Acts, and once in the first Epistle of Peter. The word "saint" might apply to any earnest seeker after God, any one longing to know the truth, and to do the truth, whether nominally a Christian or not. There might be many such at Rome who had not heard much of Christ, and to all such this epistle, which has so much of Christ in it, was addressed.

Grace to you and peace. The Greek word *charis* joy, is here, and often elsewhere in the New Testament, rightly rendered grace. It means that kind disposition of one person toward another which is itself a favor and which often manifests itself in the bestowment of other favors. It was the word employed by Greek and Roman letter writers in a formal sense merely, very much after the manner of our "Dear Sir;" but Paul uses it in a higher and more significant sense, and generally adds, as he does here, "from God the Father," etc. The grace which he feels toward us as Father, and which he also has actually manifested toward us in his provision for us and dealings with us may well produce in us joy. But Paul also says *and peace*. This was the word

which the Jews used; but Paul uses it in a sense far higher than the formal one; it was with him not a mere passing salutation, as one Jew might say to another *shalom l'ka*, peace be unto thee. Paul's wish was a real one, and the peace which he prayed might be to the saints at Rome was peace with their own consciences, peace with one another, and peace with God which comes from God the Father of them and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1; John xiv. 27.

INTRODUCTION, VERSES 8-15.

After the salutation Paul does not proceed at once to the statement and discussion of the fundamental theme of the epistle, but, as in his other epistles, he first writes a short introduction or preface. In verses 1-7, in addition to his usual salutation, he established, as we have seen, between himself and the Romans an official relation—he on his part being an apostle to the Gentiles by call of Christ, they on their part being by call of Christ the members of his great parish; hence his right to address them. But Paul was not merely an apostle and profound reasoner; he was also a man of profound emotional nature, tender and affectionate of heart. He now proceeds, therefore, as he also did in other instances, to further win the attention of his readers by informing them of the deep and sincere interest which he feels in their welfare, and of the deep and sincere affection which he has for them. They are far from the center of the usual apostolic labors; but he cares for them; he prays for them; he commends their world-famed faith; he longs to visit them; he thinks that he may derive strength and en-

V. 8:—*First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*

V. 9:—*For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.*

couragement from the actual sight of those so faithful under such adverse circumstances; and thus does the great and tender-hearted apostle establish between himself and them a relation of heart to heart.

V. 8. **First.** In the first place, Paul expresses his thanks concerning the Christians at Rome, before proceeding with the discussion of the great subject of salvation; the formal “in the second place,” however, does not occur. **My God.** One’s God is the God whom one serves and to whom one lives in close affectionate relation. **Through Jesus Christ.** “The gifts of God come to us through Christ, our thanksgivings go to God through Christ” (Bengel); so also do our prayers; he is the mediator between God and man and man and God, he is as the ladder which the angels ascended and descended. **For you all.** On account of all of you. **The whole world.** Rome being the center to which and from which Christians from all parts were constantly moving, the faithfulness of those at Rome to their Christian profession would become universally known.

V. 9. **For God is my witness.** The strong assertion which I make is true, and since none but God can know my constant, voiceless prayers concerning you, I solemnly appeal to him as my witness. The burden, not only of all the Churches, but of each individual Church in his vast field, was on the heart of

V. 10:—*Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.*

V. 11:—*For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.*

Paul, and none but God could know how intensely; and at the very time he wrote this Epistle to the Romans he was endeavoring to establish the Corinthians, and was gathering contributions to carry to the poor Christians in far-away Judea. ***With my spirit.*** With my inmost heart and soul. ***In the gospel of his Son.*** In preaching the gospel of his Son. The fact that he thus preached the glad tidings of the Father's Son was proof that he thus served the Son's Father.

V. 10. ***Making request.*** It had long been Paul's desire and abiding prayer that he might at some time be so prospered as to visit the Christians at Rome; and this is a proof of his affection for them, and the sincerity of his thanksgiving on account of them, mentioned in verse 8. But he can not go now for he is on the eve of a long journey to Jerusalem; "and the eagerness of desire is tempered by resignation to the will of God, who will bring all to a prosperous issue in his own way, and at his own time." Three or four years after this Paul went to Rome, his expenses being paid by the Roman government; and thus was his prayer answered. But he went as a chained prisoner.

V. 11. ***For I long to see you.*** The word "I long" (epipotho), along with the expression of the

V. 12:—*That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.*

V. 13:—*Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (but was let hitherto), that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.*

desire which goes out toward them, is one of *regret* at not having been able to come sooner. (Godet.) See also ch. xv. 23. **Spiritual gift.** A gift to their spirit, through Paul's spirit, from the Holy Spirit; such as increase of strength, knowledge, love, hope, faith. **May be established.** Made secure against trials, especially the temptation to relapse into idolatry and other forms of heathenism, as this was the trial to which they would be most severely exposed. Paul does not say "that I may establish you;" he regarded himself as only the means through whom the increased strength was to be imparted.

V. 12. *That is, I may be comforted,* etc. Paul hastens to assure the Roman Christians, whose faith he had commended in verse 8, that he does not expect the benefit to be all on their side, but that he also expects to receive needed encouragement from his association with them, and from his actual observation of their faith. This is a beautiful example both of Paul's humility and of his delicacy of feeling—characteristics of the truly great man.

V. 13. *Now I would not have you ignorant,* etc. Paul had been an apostle about twenty years; his Roman readers might have said, If he feels so deep an interest in us and has been an apostle so long,

V. 14:—*I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.*

why has he not visited us? Hence, he assures them that he has often purposed to visit them, but that he has been let, or hindered, hitherto. He does not state what the hindering cause was. Perhaps there was more than one cause, one or all of which they might not fully appreciate; or perhaps he does not wish to place much stress on simply an anticipated criticism of his failure to visit them. Rather than say any thing that would intimate a belief on his part that the Romans earnestly desired him to come, he hastens to tell them that the reason why he wishes to visit them is a personal one, and recalls their mind by a different choice of words to the fact stated in verse 11, that he wished to have some fruit of labor among them, even as among other Gentiles. The whole verse furnishes us another illustration of Paul's delicacy of feeling.

V. 14. *I am debtor.* Note the still varying aspect in which Paul presents his desire to visit the Romans; (1) that they may receive some spiritual gift; (2) that he may receive from them some spiritual gift; (3) that he may have some fruit in them, interest, as it were, on the gift which they had received from him; (4) that he may pay a debt which he owes them. He was the apostle to the Gentile world, and he was under obligation, the necessity being laid upon him. He claims no credit for his zeal, and it is no unholy ambition simply to be world-wide in his ministry, for he looked also to Spain and the countries far beyond Rome; it is simply an apostolic debt, an obligation under which he has been placed, not *by* but *to* all the Gentile peoples of what-

V. 15:—*So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.*

ever nationality or degree of culture, and his duty is his delight. It is worth while to notice this ground on which Paul bases his missionary labors. It is not their condition, however pitiable on any account their condition may be, for they may, after all, regard themselves as "cultured Greeks," needing no missionary. But with Paul the basis of missionary labor is simply the debt or obligation under which he has been placed by Christ to all the heathen. It is a tremendous debt, and he must endeavor with all his might to discharge it, let the heathen themselves think about as they pleased. The Church of to-day should take the same true, and pure, and lofty view of the matter; and the Church which has to be aroused by painful appeals to its pity, is not in a good spiritual condition. I owe this debt and I am going to pay it, no matter whether my creditor thinks he needs the money or not—that is all that it ought to be necessary to say about it. The fact that Christ has saved the Church is the one circumstance that makes it the Church's bounden duty to save the heathen; and the same may be said of any Christian individually, for we are all apostles to the Gentiles, though, alas! we are not all Pauls.

V. 15. *So, as much as in me is.* The meaning of Paul's words seems to be: So far as it depends on me, or, as for my part, I am ready; my only restriction is, not the want of a willing and ready spirit, but the want of opportunity. *At Rome also.* Paul was just as ready and willing to preach the gospel to the unconverted and cultured people of Rome as

elsewhere. He was not ashamed of this gospel in any community or before any audience, however influential or cultured. The words, "to you that are at Rome," must not be restricted to the Christians whom Paul was addressing; the learned and the noble who knew little, or nothing, of the gospel, and who might, perhaps, care nothing for it, are especially meant, though he includes all as one population. Several years afterward when Paul did actually preach the gospel to Cæsar's household he seemed to have won some of these noble ones (Phil. iv. 22).

II.

THE DOCTRINE ANNOUNCED.

Justification by grace through faith.. Vs. 16, 17.)

Having presented his heart-felt salutations to the Christians at Rome, and having in the prefatory statements which we have just considered established between himself and them agreeable relations, Paul proceeds in a natural and informal manner to the fundamental theme of his epistle: "The gospel the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," or, justification by grace through faith in Christ.

V. 16:—*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

V. 16. *The gospel of Christ.* The Revised Version omits the words "of Christ." They are not essential to the sense, for the word "gospel" was already understood to mean the gospel of Christ, and besides the whole of what here follows makes the meaning very clear. *It is the power of God.* Not a power outside of God and which God uses in order to save man; but a power, or influence, or principle, which proceeds from God into man, making him safe and sound. *To every one that believeth.* Two questions here arise: First. To every one who believes what? And the answer may be stated in a twofold manner: (1) Believes the story or glad tidings of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus;

V. 17:—*For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

(2) Believes God's righteousness, which is revealed in Christ. Second question, What is it to believe? It is not simply to assent intellectually to the truth of a proposition; for one may, of course, believe in this sense that light illuminates, and yet be so situated as not to be illuminated by it; so may one believe that the historical story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, is true, and yet have such an attitude toward that story or revelation as not to be saved by it. Before the light can lighten the window must be opened; before the gospel, or Christ, or the righteousness of God, can become a curse-removing and health-giving power to me, I must open the door of my soul and admit it. And to open thus my soul's door is to exercise faith. *To the Jew first.* To the Jew first in respect to time. The gospel was made known first to the Jews, and then by Jewish preachers to the Gentiles. *And also to the Greeks.* By Greeks are here meant all who are not Jews; it was a more respectful term than Gentiles, which in the Jewish use was generally equivalent simply to heathen, and for this reason Paul probably here employs it; the gospel was the power of God unto salvation, also unto those who regarded themselves as the most learned and cultured.

V. 17. *For therein.* In the gospel. The gospel is itself the revelation of the righteousness of God. *The righteousness of God.* Not *the* righteousness of, nor *a* righteousness of, but God's righteousness, as distinguished here, perhaps, from his wrath mentioned

in the next verse. But what is meant by God's righteousness? It can not refer to God's act, as a judge, of justifying or acquitting the condemned sinner, for that act is not revealed in the gospel as having been performed or as being performed. It refers rather to the willingness or disposition of God to remove his wrath from over the sinner on condition of faith, or of what is called believing in the preceding verse. This aspect of God's character was scarcely known to the Gentiles; it was fully revealed to the Jews in the Old Testament, but the Jews had so far mutilated the revelation as to substitute legal works for faith, or as to depend on the covenant relation in which they stood to God as a people, independently of any consideration of personal character either on their own part or God's. The gospel is a revelation of God's righteousness to every one that believeth. A revelation to whom? To every one who has heard the gospel as presented either in the Old or New Testament; but the revelation is of benefit only to those who believe.

Revealed from faith to faith. Although the gospel is a revelation to every man of God's righteousness, it is a revelation which effects salvation only in the case of those who believe; that is, its efficacy proceeds on man's part from man's faith, and it proceeds onward to yet higher degrees of faith. Faith does not cease with being the mere act of opening the door of the soul to the light or revelation which is called the gospel, but it becomes ever thereafter our state or character; we live with open door, and the light which is life abides in us. This teaching should not have been strange or new to Paul's Jewish readers, for, as he reminds them, their own prophet said that *the just shall live by faith*; that is, the sinner whom

Paul here views as already made righteous by his faith shall also live by his faith. Hab. ii. 4. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 20.

III.

THE DOCTRINE EXPOUNDED.

First Proposition: The universal need of salvation, (i. 18—iii. 20), in the case of both Jews and Gentiles.

(1) *The Gentiles.*

The apostle having briefly stated his fundamental theme, viz.: that the gospel as a revelation of God's righteousness is God's power unto salvation, proceeds in the next place to develop the argument whereby the thesis is to be established. He first shows the condition of the Gentile world from which it appears evident that the Gentiles had not attained into righteousness by glorifying God as God, etc., but that on the other hand they had really lost the knowledge of God, and instead of being righteous in his sight, they had proceeded from bad to worse. Hence their need of that salvation which is revealed in the gospel.

V. 18:—*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*

V. 18. **For.** The force of this word seems to be: The gospel is a revelation of the saving power or righteousness of God, and such a revelation the world needs, *for* there is also an abiding revelation of his wrath, which Paul unfolds in a fearful manner in the following verses. If he had discussed this revelation before stating his doctrine of righteousness or salvation by faith, the order of his words might have been: As there is thus a revelation of God's wrath in

the human conscience so is there a revelation of his righteousness or saving power in the gospel.

The Wrath of God. As the article is omitted in verse 17 from "righteousness" so here it is omitted, in the Greek, from "wrath;" God's righteousness, God's wrath. **Is revealed.** The universal conscience of man testifies that he is not right with God, and that God is not and can not be pleased with him as he is. The heathen know this, and the fact that they do know it, and yet have not the gospel, that other revelation of God, makes their condition, if possible, only the more pitiable. The crowning distinction of the Scripture is, not that it reveals God's intense disapprobation of sin in man, for that is revealed in man's own heart; but its crowning distinction is that it reveals God's righteousness in Christ as a power unto salvation from sin and all of sin's consequences. **From heaven.** "Righteousness is revealed in the gospel, wrath is revealed from heaven." It required the incarnation of God in Christ on earth to fully reveal his righteousness, but his wrath he revealed without becoming incarnate, from his throne, as it were in heaven. Paul conceives the revelation of wrath as preceding in point of time the revelation of the gospel. The recognition of sin is the recognition of wrath, and the recognition of wrath is the necessary prelude of the gospel. See the frequent mention of wrath in this epistle, chapter ii. 5, 8; iii. 5; iv. 15; v. 9; ix. 22; sometimes it is spoken of as being against sin, sometimes against the sinner. "In God, who is the living good, wrath appears," says Godet, "as the holy disapprobation of evil, and the firm resolve to destroy it. But it is false to say, as is often done, that this divine emotion

applies only to the evil doer." As the sinner identifies himself with sin he himself becomes the object of the wrath and all its consequences. And Abbott: "The truth of God's wrath can no more be eliminated from Scripture without unraveling its whole texture than can the truth of his love. They are indeed the light and shade of the same quality in him. Love has its wrath, and the intensity of the indignation against evil and falsehood, will and must be exactly proportioned to the intensity of the love for goodness and truth."

Ungodliness and unrighteousness. Ungodliness is impiety, or irreverence toward God; unrighteousness is immorality. The ungodly is one who is in opposition to the being and character of God, the unrighteous is one who lives in opposition to the will of God. The latter is the more general term, the former is the stronger. ***Hold the truth in unrighteousness.*** This describes the particular class of men whom Paul had in mind, to wit: the Gentiles, whom he at once proceeds to further describe. The sin here charged against the Gentiles is not the sin simply of living unrighteously, or immorally, but of having unrighteously held back or repressed the truth—that is, the knowledge of God revealed in the conscience. They have wickedly held back the truth by not allowing it to have on them its legitimate effect; in other words, by resisting it. Having repressed the light, they do the deeds of darkness described in the following verses.

V. 19. ***Because.*** The force of this word, and the meaning of the verse, may be exhibited thus: That the Gentiles are guilty of thus repressing the truth is

V. 19:—*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.*

V. 20:—*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.*

evident *because* of the two existing facts which Paul proceeds to state: (a) They have the truth, that is so much of the knowledge of God as may be known by men by the light of what may be called nature, for God has thus shown or revealed it unto them; (b) they do not live in accordance with this truth or knowledge which they have. They have not only lived wickedly, but by thus living they have prevented the truth from asserting itself in them and developing into yet greater knowledge. If any man would *know* the truth let him *do* so much of the truth as he already knows. John iii. 21; vii. 17. But from him that hath and doth not use it, shall be taken away that which he hath.

That which may be known of God. So much as may be known by men as men without a special supernatural revelation, though this knowledge also came to them from God. Paul states in the next verse in what this knowledge consists.

V. 20. *The invisible things.* By which are meant God's eternal power and Godhead, as stated further on. Paul speaks of these as being seen—that is, as being perceived with the mind's eye. They are called invisible in contrast with the visible images of God which the Gentiles made, verse 23, or perhaps in contrast with the visible universe, or things made, by which the invisible things are revealed to the human

understanding. *From the creation.* Not invisible since the creation, but manifested to the mind's eye ever since the creation, and manifested as stated in the next clause by the visible works of God. The heavens declare the glory of God; the earth also declares his glory. *His eternal power and Godhead.* When man views nature power as exhibited therein is that which most quickly arrests his attention. One of the oldest names of the divine Being, El or Elohim, is a word which means the Powerful One. Nor is he presented in nature simply as the Almighty, but as one whose power is employed with intelligence and benevolence. Paul says that this power which the All-powerful One manifests in nature is presented as eternal—that is, it dates beyond, and is the cause of all second causes; and hence there is in the first place but one cause. By *Godhead* is meant divinity, or that essential element of God's being and nature which distinguishes him from all other beings and constitutes him God. Paul says that God is thus clearly seen, being manifested by his works; not merely *seen*, as a brute may also see nature, but *clearly seen*, seen by intelligent mental discernment. Physical nature is presented to man's physical eye; the invisible spiritual God presents himself by means of nature to man's spiritual eye; and thus spirit becomes visible to spirit. And this revelation of himself God has addressed to all men, so that the Gentiles are without excuse. If they had used this knowledge as they should have done, all would have been well with them in their relation to God, as Paul says in chapter ii. 7; but as it is, their knowledge is far in advance of their morality, both their hearts and their lives being woefully wrong, as he proceeds to show.

V. 21:—*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

V. 21. **Because.** Paul now goes on to show how the Gentiles held the truth in unrighteousness; or, in other words, how they had repressed or obstructed the natural operation of the above mentioned knowledge of God by their wickedness; and hence why it was that the wrath of God was revealed against them, to wit: because knowing God they glorified him not as God, etc. It is worth while to notice here that Paul's history of the Gentiles in this respect is the history of mankind generally. It is not ignorance that causes a human soul to be "lost;" for all men, even the heathen, *know* better than they *do*; and hence a large function of the Christian, and of the Christian ministry especially, is to *persuade* men. But by failure to use the knowledge it may be lost; the eye of man's spirit to which God as a spirit addresses himself may become darkened or blinded, so that he can not be clearly seen. The remaining part of this verse describes the first step in the awful estrangement from God which the apostle depicts.

They glorified him not as God. The heathens worshiped, and they worshiped God; but they did not worship him *as God*, as a being of divine spiritual perfections, but rather as a reflection or deification of themselves. ***Neither were thankful.*** They did not recognize and worship him as the author and giver of all good—to do which is the best safeguard against vain imaginations and a darkened heart.

Vain in their imaginations. Empty in their reasonings as to what sort of being God is and how to

V. 22:—*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*

worship him, using various idols or images which were merely empty nothings. ***Their foolish heart was darkened.*** Such reasonings and practices always have the effect of gradually excluding so much of God's light as is already in the heart, and then the heart is darkened. The word "foolish" here means stupid, senseless, mindless, as when we say one has no mind for poetry, or mathematics, etc., meaning that he has no relish, no talent, or aptitude, for such matter. So the heart, failing to practice the truth, loses its aptitude or ability to understand the truth, and then soon loses the truth itself, and thus becomes darkened.

V. 22. ***Professing themselves to be wise, etc.*** Pretending or alleging themselves to be wise. This was self-conceit. ***Fools.*** The word here means dull, destitute of what we call quickness of wit, or keenness of perception or mental vision. It seems to be a law of our being that this persistent pretense to superior wisdom should produce in us dullness of wit. As it is only the humble who shall be exalted, so revelations are made only to "babes." It is a wise divine law. "I thank thee, O Father, . . . because thou hast hid these things from the [so-called] wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. xi. 25). But Paul is not here speaking of the Greek philosophy in general or absolutely, but with respect to idolatry in particular, and he means to say that all the wisdom of the sages did not prevent the Greeks and other cultivated nations from becoming the most debased in their religion, and that this pretense of wisdom in regard to God and divine

V. 23:—*And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.*

V. 24:—*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.*

things was itself one of the chief initial causes of their debasement. For one to follow the conceits or “vain imaginations” of one’s own or of another’s reason instead of the revelation which God has made in his word or in nature is to prove that one is foolish to begin with, and from this folly it is not far to dullness, or bluntness of mental and spiritual perception.

V. 23. **Changed . . . into.** The meaning is that they represented the incorruptible God, of glorious perfections, by means of images of man and even of beasts; such, by reason of their dullness, had their conception of God become. Man was made originally in the image of God, but he has come to such a state that he changes God into the image of man, even of the lowest beasts. Man has made himself to be his own standard of perfection, and he can not rise above it.

V. 24. **Wherefore also.** The Revised Version, on the authority of several of the ancient manuscripts, omits the word “also,” but on the authority of many others, and of the sense of the passage, it ought to be retained. There were two renunciations: (1) The Gentiles gave God up. (2) On this account God also gave up the Gentiles. **To uncleanness through the lusts.** Or rather, God gave them up in accordance with the lusts or earnest or evil desires of their hearts

V. 25:—*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

to uncleanness. The abyss toward which they were tending was one of uncleanness, which Paul describes in horrid detail in the following verses; and God positively removed from them his withholding hand and let them go; his Spirit and providence would strive with them no longer. By this deliberate resolve of God their sins shall become the means of their punishment, and thereby perhaps ultimately of their restoration. Hence, while this was doubtless the revelation of God's wrath referred to in verse 18, it was a revelation of such wrath as looked beyond the infliction of misery to restoration, for even in wrath he remembers mercy. After reaching a certain point of progress in sin, the only way for their dull and darkened soul to learn the evil of sin was to experience it by indulging sin in the utmost excess. At last it biteth like an adder; and then might they listen to the gospel message of healing. It is to be observed, therefore, that this revelation or infliction of God's wrath here referred to is such as takes place in this world, had indeed already taken place in Paul's time, and is ever doing so. But this wrath ultimately becomes the wrath of "the day of wrath" mentioned in ii. 5; and all along through human history, and at the last, it is a righteous and holy wrath.

V. 25. **Who.** This word here means "those who," and the reference is back to verses 23, 24. God gave up to uncleanness, etc., those, I say, who changed the

V. 26:—*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.*

glory or truth concerning God, or the true idea of God, into the lie just mentioned; that is, the images made like unto man and beasts. "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isa. xlv. 20; that is, is there not an idol or image in my right hand? See also Jer. xiii. 25; xvi. 19. ***The creature more than the Creator.*** As they had changed or travestied the truth of God into a lie, so it was "the lie," or idol in the form of a creature, which they worshiped; the word which Paul uses, as well as the context, shows that his meaning is, they did not worship God at all, but the creature instead of God. ***Who is blessed forever.*** Who is praised forever, notwithstanding this conduct and condition of the Gentiles; *he* is not affected by the dishonor which *they* cast upon him, but dwells in the midst of the praises of his people and of angels forever. Paul frequently utters such heart-felt doxologies as this. See vii. 25; ix. 5; xi. 33-36; Eph. iii. 21.

V. 26. ***For this cause.*** Notice the progress of the Gentiles in sin: 1. They held back the truth in unrighteousness; 2. They did not glorify God as God, but became fruitless in their disputations and darkened in their hearts (verse 21); 3. They lost sight of God and substituted the worship of idols (verses 23-25); 4. Having sinned thus against God, they are given up to sin against themselves in the vilest manner. "The sin against God's nature entails as its penalty sin against man's own nature," which is the meet recompense of their error in repressing the

V. 27:—*And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.*

V. 28:—*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;*

truth at the outset and proceeding in the subsequent steps of sin. See the note on verse 24.

V. 27. *And likewise also the men.* A most unnatural sensual abomination is referred to in this, such as was foreign even to beasts. We have other ancient evidence than Paul's of the prevalence among the Gentiles, particularly the Greeks, of this revolting sin. It seems indeed to have prevailed to such an extent among various nations of antiquity as to require special laws for its prevention. Nor was this awful abomination restricted to males, as Paul intimates in verse 26.

V. 28. *Did not like to retain God.* Did not think it worth while to retain in their mind such a view of God as would cause them to make his will the rule or law of their conduct, so God on his part gave them over, etc. As they deliberately gave up God, so God gave up them. He honors those who honor him; he dishonors those who dishonor him; this is a natural law in the spiritual world; both natural and a law because God made it so, and he made it so because he is God. It is not conceivable that he could have made the unholy wholesome. *A reprobate mind.* They did not approbate God, as the words "did not like to retain," etc.,

V. 29:—*Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,*

V. 30:—*Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,*

V. 31:—*Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:*

mean. They reprobated God from their knowledge, so God reprobated them unto themselves. Having refused to appreciate the knowledge of God, they became incapable of appreciating it. From them that have and use not shall be taken away that which they have. Notice how often Paul says God "gave them over," because of their apostacy from him; being merciful and holy, what else could he do? Let them learn by experience; let them see for themselves whither the road will lead them.

Vs. 29-31. In these verses Paul further describes the reprobate condition of the Gentiles of whom he is writing. It is a fearful picture, but true to the original—a heaping of words of blackest import one upon another. Any one may see for himself that it is not in the slightest degree overdrawn by reading such pagan authors as Cicero and Tacitus, and especially Juvenal; or Gibbon's *Rome*, chap. ii., Farrar's *Early Days of Christianity*, ch. i., Farrar's *Life and Times of Paul*, Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of Paul*, Lecky's *History of European Morals*, Herbreman's *Business Life in Rome*, and many other books. Froude, the English historian and essayist, says: "Within historical times the earth has never seen—let us hope it never may see again—such a condition of human society as prevailed in the

Roman empire during the centuries which elapsed between the crucifixion and the conversion of Constantine.”—*Short Studies on Great Subjects*. Paul was a constant eye-witness of such things as he describes in this chapter; and even as he was writing these words he was in a Roman city where a thousand public harlots were kept at the public expense, to say nothing of the private ones; and to “Corinthianize” had become another name for harlotry. It is not surprising that the clean and sensitive soul of Paul did, under the influence of such daily observation of the life about him, make his utterances vehement. Yes, the doctrine of being saved by doing right is good as a theory, but how are the Gentiles to be induced, or rather enabled to do right? Not otherwise than by dying and being made over again into new creatures, having in them Christ as their life.

V. 30. *Haters of God*. The Revised Version, following the classical usage, the lexicons, and several critical commentaries renders this word (*theosteurgeio*) *hated of God*, or hateful to God; so also the Vulgate, Wiclif’s version of 1380, and the Rheims of 1582. But the Tyndale of 1534, Cranmer, 1539, Geneva, 1557, and the King James versions, and several ancient patristic authorities, and many moderns, render it *haters of God*. This makes the better sense, and harmonizes better with the current of the apostle’s thought. All the classes mentioned were extremely odious to God, but all were not to the same extent haters of God; some were indifferent, some were more or less criminally ignorant, while others were avowed haters of God; this was the climax of the ascending scale.

V. 32:—*Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

V. 32. **Who.** Those who ; including not a distinct and lost class, but all who fall under the description mentioned in the preceding verses. **Knowing the judgment of God.** His judgment was, that those who do such things are worthy of death, and this they knew. **Not only do, . . . but.** Implying that it is even worse to coolly approve or applaud others who do such things than it is to do them ourselves under the pressure of passion or other temptation.

(2) *The Jews.* (Chap. ii. 1-29.)

Paul, having thus dwelt upon the awful pollution and iniquity of the Gentiles for the purpose of showing that there is absolutely no hope for them on any other theory of salvation than the one which he had announced (i. 16, 17), proceeds now to show that the Jews also, on any other theory, are in a no less hopeless condition. The facts that the Jews as a nation were God's chosen people, and that they differed so widely from the Gentiles in their religion, do not alter in any way the truth of this statement. They rather indeed make the matter only so much the worse for the Jews ; for God does not save a man because he has such and such an amount of knowledge, or a religion of such and such sort. God is no respecter of persons ; he deals with all on the same principles ; and if a man, or any number of persons, have much knowledge and a good religion and do not live accordingly, it is so much the worse for him. And all the while Paul keeps before us the fact that the outer life,

Chap. II., v. 1:—*Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.*

V. 2:—*But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.*

our conduct, is not our life in the true sense, only in so far as it is the outflow of the life within us, and from which alone it receives any moral quality. If this inner life or principle, whether in Gentile or Jew, is of the sort that God approves, it is well; but if it is not, it counts for nothing at all, no matter how formally religious the outward conduct may be.

V. 1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man.* The Jew had doubtless listened with much attention and approbation to what Paul had said about the Gentiles; but now he turns upon the Jew himself and tells him that he does the same things which he so cordially condemns in the Gentiles. *Whosoever thou art.* That is, any Jew who, being guilty himself, judges the Gentiles as if he were not guilty. The words are no less applicable to all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, in their relation with one another.

V. 2. *But we are sure.* The Revised Version changes the word *but* into *and*, which makes a good sense, which is this: You condemn others for doing certain things; *and* God's judgment in regard to these things is according to truth, as you will admit since it is the same as yours; therefore, as you do these things you ought to expect God to condemn you. If we retain the word *but*, the reasoning is this: You condemn, and you admit that God condemns, these things

V. 3:—*And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?*

which the Gentiles do. You think, however, that, although you may do the same things, you will be judged by a different standard from the Gentiles; *but* such is not the case, God's judgment being in each case according to truth or equity. This seems to me to be the better of the two senses, as it is more in harmony with the apostle's thought; his purpose is to show that Jews also are the objects of God's disapprobation, and this he could not do unless it were settled at the outset that they are weighed in the same balance as the Gentiles.

V. 3. *And thinkest thou this.* This is an interrogative and therefore a more vivid method of affirming that God surely will not approve in the Jew that which he condemns in the Gentile. If the Jew did these things, and if the Jew was to be dealt with on the same principles of equity as the Gentile, it follows that the Jew also is in need of salvation; and it further follows that the Jew's theory of salvation by works irrespective of character is a wrong one; and it still further follows, therefore, that Paul's own doctrine as stated in chapter i. 16, 17 is the true one. These are the thoughts which Paul has constantly in mind, though his chief object in this chapter is as stated in the last note.

V. 4. *Or despisest thou.* Paul's meaning here is: Or is it possible that, instead of indulging the illusory belief that you are to be judged on a different principle from the Gentile, you really have a con-

V. 4:—*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

tempt for the riches of God's goodness, etc., and are sinning against him with a high hand? If this be so you are really in a worse condition than under the other supposition. But one of the two suppositions is true; therefore in either case you are the objects of God's disapprobation, and hence in need of a salvation which your theory does not furnish.

Riches of his goodness. The riches of his goodness to you Jews, in choosing you as his people, in furnishing you with many revelations of his character and will, in sending to you the Messiah, etc. God might be good and yet not have forbearance or long-suffering. He is good in that he bestows blessings; and after he has bestowed blessings and we requite him with ingratitude and rebellion he is forbearing in that he restrains his indignation giving us warnings and opportunities for repentance; and he is long-suffering in that, though "vengeance is his," he inflicts it not under the influence of passion or in the excitement, as it were, of the moment. All these are but manifestations of his love. **Not knowing.** That is, not caring to know, utterly indifferent to the fact that his *goodness leadeth thee to repentance*. These displays of God's love always lead to repentance; thither they always point. But some men do not follow, because they will not, the leading of love, and hence some men never attain to repentance. They are as travelers on a road with many partings hither and thither, and who, despising the guide posts, reach not the right destination.

V. 5:—*But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*

V. 5. ***But after***, etc. After here means *according to*, as it does in such current expressions as a painting or other production “after A B”—that is, after the manner of A B, or according to A B. The sense is: According to the custom, or manner, or rule, of your hard and impenitent heart you treasure up wrath, etc.; it was the custom of your hard-hearted and stiff-necked fathers, and you are doing as they did. *Hardness* is incapability of being impressed by the displays of God’s love; *impenitence* is the refusal to heed the leadings of his goodness, which would have led the Jew to the change not only of his outward life, but also to the change of his views in regard to the way to be saved, and hence to the realization of his condition as a lost and condemned sinner. ***Treasurest up unto*** (or for) ***thyself wrath***. God would have bestowed upon them the riches of his goodness; they would have it not, but laid up for themselves the riches of wrath, which “riches” can consist in nothing more direful than all the nameless woes implied in the words “separation from God,” utter ungodlikeness. We feel an infinitesimal fragment of it, now and then when, realizing keenly that we are impure, we stand in the presence of the pure. And this is a law, the outflow of the very nature of God. ***Against the day of wrath*** is the same as *in the day of wrath*; the day of wrath is, as it were, the place in which the impenitent store up their treasures or riches of wrath. Paul does not mention what day it is, whether the epoch

V. 6:—*Who will render to every man according to his deeds:*

of the final overthrow of the Jews by the Romans, or the day of the final general judgment; his mind is on the fact rather than the particular time. The righteous judgment of God will at that time be revealed upon the impenitent as not hitherto, and it will also be revealed as righteous; he does nothing unrighteously.

V. 6. *Who will render.* In opposition to the vain belief of the Jews that God would judge them on a different principle from that on which he would judge the Gentiles, Paul here plainly affirms that God will judge, or render to, every man, whether Jew or heathen, on precisely the same principle—that is, according to their deeds, or lives, or character, all of which expressions amount to the same thing, for a man's deeds are not his, they are not any thing morally speaking, only in so far as they are the outflow of his heart or character. "Out of the heart proceedeth," etc., Matt. xv. 19, 20. See also Matt. xii. 36, 37; 2 Cor. v. 10; Gal. vi. 7, and numerous other passages.

The word of God nowhere teaches that it makes no difference how a man lives provided only he has what is commonly called "faith;" but it does everywhere teach that his relation to God, and consequently his eternal destiny, is determined by his life; his life in the next world is the same life which he had in this world; his deeds here are the visible part of his life, his faith here is the invisible part of the same life—that part which may be said to be hid with Christ in God. And when a man is said to be justified by faith

V. 7:—*To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life :*

V. 8:—*But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,*

it is meant that it is this aspect of his life which renders him approved of God ; and when he is said by James to be justified by works, it is meant that it is the same life considered in its visible aspect that renders him approved of God. A man may be condemned by his faith also, though the word is not used in this bad sense in the New Testament. The expression in this verse, " render to every man," which is the same as to judge, means either to condemn or to justify, to approve or to disapprove, according to the deeds or works.

Vs. 7, 8. *To them who*, etc. Only two classes ; but they are not the Jew and the heathen. Some of the circumcised may be in both classes ; some of the uncircumcised may be in both. The approved receive eternal life—that is, they receive that which they have all the while, by patient continuance in well doing, been seeking, viz., glory, and honor, and immortality. These make eternal life. They receive this because they are approved, and they are approved because they sought this. This sort of seeking is what is meant by their " deeds." Every man, be he even blind Gentile, always finds what he truly seeks. *But unto them*—the other class, which is also described by its deeds or life. The word " contentious," or factious, is one which applies to the inner disposition only, which shows that by " deeds" Paul did not mean simply the acts of the outer life. It describes especially the

V. 9:—*Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;*

Jewish rabbis who were much given to contentions. The next clause refers to the outer life; to not obey the truth is to disobey it, but Paul describes both negatively and positively by naming that which they do *not* obey, and then that which they do obey. By the truth is meant that truth of which the gospel is the best embodiment; to obey it is to live in harmony with it. By unrighteousness is here meant the opposite of the truth; sin is in its very nature a lie, and Satan, the supreme embodiment of sin, is "the father of lies." His servant ye are whom ye obey; and to obey sin is to obey one whose only law is lawless impulse and passion. ***Indignation and wrath.*** Indignation is the mental state or emotion, so to speak, of God toward the class of persons here described; wrath is its outward exhibition. The Revised Version, following the best manuscript authority, reverses the words, and reads "wrath and indignation"—that is, the thought of Paul, as Godet suggests, sees the wrath first and then the emotion from which it proceeds; but it is doubtful if Paul meant to lay any stress on this distinction.

V. 9. ***Tribulation and anguish.*** Paul uses these four terms, indignation, wrath, tribulation, anguish, rather for the purpose of conveying a strong meaning than with reference to their psychological or etymological meaning; this wrath which is the evidence of God's intense indignation, reaching the class of persons described, causes the severest affliction in the whole being. The reader of the Greek text may easi-

V. 10:—*But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:*

ly see that "eternal life" in verse 7 is in the accusative case, and is the object of the verb "will render" in verse 6; God will render eternal life to the persons there described. Indignation, wrath, tribulation, anguish, are in the nominative case; these shall be or come upon the persons described. The change is significant. God renders to one, it comes upon the other, himself being to blame; he makes himself the agent of his own misery. *Upon every soul of man.* To every man's soul, and the rule applies to every man who fulfills the description in the next clause.

That doeth evil. (Katergazomai). That accomplishes evil as in the manner described in verse 8. *Of the Jew first.* Upon the soul of the Jew. The word *first* must have the same force here as in verse 10, and also i. 16. Paul's custom is to mention the Jew first, because he was the first in knowledge, opportunity, and responsibility. If he does evil it will be only so much the worse for him, because of his greater knowledge, etc. If he works good it will be only so much the better, because of the greater risk which he has escaped.

V. 10. *But glory.* Paul here repeats for the purpose of emphasis. Glory, honor, and peace, I say. He here mentions another constituent of eternal life, peace. Compare verse 7. Peace was a precious word with Paul. *That worketh good.* (Ergazomai), not necessarily accomplishing good, but working good as described in verse 7, chiefly it may be by "seeking."

V. 11:—*For there is no respect of persons with God.*

V. 12:—*For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;*

The faithful servant is the one who has well done, rather than the one who has been successful. But the other class is here viewed as always successful in accomplishing evil. **To the Jew first.** See preceding note.

V. 11. **For God is no respecter of persons.** A reiteration in other words of the principle already stated in its outward manifestation in verses 8-10; and with this principle, even with these very words almost, the Jew must have been acquainted; see Deut. x. 17; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Job xiii. 10; xxxiv. 19; Psalms lxxxii. 2. But the Jew understood it to mean that in so far only as one Jew is compared with another Jew God is no respecter of persons. But Paul virtually tells them that this is a false exegesis and that it refers to Jew and Gentile no less truly than to Jew and Jew. And Paul quotes it as an Old Testament proof of his immediately preceding statement, a species of proof which a Jew especially might be supposed to be able to appreciate and accept.

V. 12. **For as many as.** In this verse it is shown how this principle of impartial judgment applies to Jews and Gentiles as well as to Jews as compared with one another. The fact that the Jew has the law—that is, much light and opportunity, and that this has been withheld from the Gentiles, is no proof of partiality on the part of God; *for* each will be judged in view of these two facts respectively. If the Gentile

V. 13:—(*For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.*)

perishes it will not be because he did not have that revelation of law which was made to the Jews; and if the Jew is saved it will not be because he did have it. It is not the absence of the law that causes the one to be lost any more than it is the mere possession of the law that causes the other to be saved. The truth of the one proposition necessarily implies the truth of the other. Salvation, or condemnation, is not a matter of what one has or has not; it is a matter of what one *is*; and because what one *is* is manifested in what one works or does the latter may be taken for the former, as it is in these verses. The reason why Gentiles perish is because they are not what they might and should be, as is shown by the fact that they do not live as they should live. See chapter i. 19-21.

V. 13. *For*, etc. What I have said in the statement just made is true, as you must know, *for* it is a plainly implied and almost an explicitly stated principle of your law (Deut. x. 5; xxvii. 26) that, not the mere hearers or possessors of the law are just or righteous before God, but the doers of the law are the ones who shall be declared just or righteous, because they are so, and they only. This is the plain meaning of this verse, and does not contradict iii. 20, on which see note at that place. Paul is not here speaking of justification by faith in any sense, only in so far as "faith" may be included in "doing," but he is endeavoring to show the Jews that the mere fact that God had favored them with the gift of his law was no

V. 14:—*For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:*

proof that they were well pleasing in his sight, for the recipients of a gift might turn out to be very unworthy of it by not making the right use of it—even much more unworthy and culpable than those who had received no gift at all; and his further point is that this failure to do the law is the very thing which must be affirmed of the Jews, and that hence they are in precisely the same category before God as the wicked Gentiles—that is, instead of being approved they are condemned.

V. 14. *For the Gentiles*, etc. In this and the following verse Paul shows, in application to the Gentiles of the principle stated in verse 6, how they also shall have to stand or fail to stand the test of law, but not law in the same form as that which the Jews had. Any law is a thing to be done or obeyed, and the Jew and Gentile had each his form of law, and both were forms of the same divine law. If the Gentile obeys the unwritten form of the law he stands, if he disobeys he falls, just as in the case of the Jew who has the written form, and hears it read in the synagogue every Sabbath. Or, instead of making this verse 14 refer back to verse 6 we may connect it immediately with verse 13 (which, however, is only an application to the Jew of verse 6), thus: The principle that not the mere hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers, etc., applies just as truly to the Gentiles, *for* when they, which have not the form of law which the Jews have, do by nature, or without the light of

V. 15:—*Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another ;)*

the written revelation, the things which are required by God's law, this very fact shows that they are not left without God's law in some form, and according as they obey it or do not obey it shall they be approved or disapproved of God. So we reach the same conclusion as by going back to verse 6.

Do by nature. By simply choosing to follow the direction of the moral faculty with which God has endowed them. **Are a law unto themselves**—that is, the dictates of this moral faculty are the Gentiles' law. The law requires the possession and practice of various traits of character; if the Gentile, who knows nothing whatever of the law as such, prefers, possesses, and practices these traits, he is not consciously keeping the law, but he is observing or doing the things contained in the law, and thereby he shows that while he is without *the* law he is not without *a* law.

V. 15. **Which show.** The pronoun in Greek is not the simple relative *who* or *which*, but *those who*, or as the same word also means in various places both in classical and New Testament Greek, *since they*, or *in that they*; and the sense and connection with the preceding verse is as follows: The Gentiles, who have not the written law, are nevertheless not without law, or in other words the very constitution of their moral natures must be regarded as their law; and this is evident not only in the fact that they do by natural or

V. 16:—*In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*

uninstructed preference the very things which the written law requires or refrain from doing those things which it forbids, but it must be regarded as further evident *in that they* show the *work*, or requirement of the law written not on tables of stone as in the case of the Jews, but on their hearts; and the fact that this choice between actions is not a merely intellectual one, or, in other words, that it is the outcome of the law in their hearts, is evident from the testimony of conscience, which even the heathen have, and from the thoughts or debates which they engage in regarding actions, sometimes approving, sometimes condemning. A good many "thoughts" of Socrates and others on right and wrong have come down to us in the writings of Xenophon, Plato, etc. It is well known that the modern heathen have a sense of sin; the fact that they have so little knowledge of the Savior from sin and sin's consequences is what renders their condition so peculiarly pitiable.

V. 16. *In the day.* If the parenthesis in which the King James translators have placed verses 13-15 be regarded, verse 16 is to be connected back with verse 12, thus: For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned having the law shall be judged by means of the law *in the day*—that is, in the final judgment day, when God, etc. This is the sense, however, whether the parenthesis be retained or omitted, for verses 13-15 are only an expansion and application to Jews and Gentiles respectively of the principle stated

in verse 12. *The secrets of men.* The testimony of their consciences and the secret thoughts or processes of approving and disapproving one another.

By Jesus Christ. By means of, or through; Christ is to act as Judge in that day, as he now acts as Savior. In office he is always both. He can not be our Savior without also being our Lord, and hence, our Judge. We can not accept him as the former without accepting him as the latter. He is our Judge any way; the Universal Judge. See Matt. xxv. 31, 32; John v. 22, 27; Acts xvii. 31. It is well to have him who shall be our Judge first to be our Savior. But it is hardly proper to intimate, as some do, that the Son of God in his capacity of Son of Man will judge more sympathetically than the Father himself would, for this implies that the former might be a little more lenient or partial toward us than the latter. On the contrary, the Father and Son "are one," in sympathy as well as in other respects. The fact that Christ took upon himself our suffering, tempted, and infirm nature and circumstances ought to bring us nearer to him, but it brought him no nearer to us in loving sympathy than he always was. He knew our frame, he remembered that we are dust, long before he became incarnate. His *life* on earth, as distinguished from his death, was not intended to affect him as judge; it was intended to affect us toward him. And besides he is also to judge the angels, and he has never taken upon himself their nature and circumstances. The reason why he is to be judge is not revealed; and hence the only reason that can be assigned is that it seemed good to the Father and Son that it should be so. *According to my gospel*—that is,

V. 17:—*Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,*

the principle laid down and illustrated in verses 6-15 is the rule according to which God will judge. Paul dwells in his teachings on the fact and manner of the judgment more than the other apostles, but in so far as the others express themselves there is no contradiction. Paul wrote much more of the New Testament than any other one writer, and at the time he wrote this epistle neither all of the four Gospels, nor the Acts, nor the most of the other non-Pauline books had been written. In their oral teachings, as in their written, some of the apostles must have dwelt more on one aspect or part of the Gospel and others on another. Paul could speak of his teaching as *his* gospel, because the Gentiles were acquainted with it as his, though in its fundamental principle it neither differed from nor contradicted that of the other apostles.

V. 17. Having shown, in verses 6-16, the principle on which God will judge all men, Paul now reverts to verses 1-5, and shows that in view of this principle on which God judges, the Jew can not expect to be approved. But it is plain that he proceeds with great caution to apply the principle to the Jew by name, not because he has the least doubt of its truth, not because he is afraid, but because of the violent and intense prejudice of the Jews, to which nothing could be more offensive than to say that God would judge them by the same impartial rule of equity as he judged the Gentiles. Paul had been full of intense Jewish prejudice once himself, and knew how it was.

V. 18:—*And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;*

Behold. The Greek text followed by the King James translators has here *ide, behold*, that preferred by the revisers and various commentators, as Bengel, Meyer, Godet, Gifford, and others, has *eide, but if*. The former is more dramatic, the latter more strictly logical; but the meaning is practically the same in either case. "You are a Jew," he says, and then follows a long description of the Jew, his knowledge, opportunities, pretensions, etc., continuing one sentence through verse 20; "but what does all this amount to," he asks, "inasmuch as your lives are manifestly out of harmony with your knowledge and opportunity?"

Art called a Jew. Bearest the proud name of Jew. As we might say now: You who are called a Christian, you who pretend to be a Christian by holding membership in the Church, you who know what is implied in the word Christian, is not *your* life just as bad as that of one who claims no such name and makes no such pretensions?

Restest in the law. Depend upon their possession of the law for salvation. **Boast of God.** As if the fact that they were God's people in a national sense was sufficient to save them. The right sort of glorying, however, is described in Jer. ix. 24.

V. 18. *And approvest the things*, etc. Paul means that they approve in theory but not in practice, but he suppresses these words probably because he wishes to suggest here their condition of heart and life rather than plainly state it. There is a touch of irony in his method.

V. 19:—*And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,*

V. 20:—*An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.*

V. 19. *And art confident.* Having stated in verses 17, 18, the Jew's attitude of conceit and satisfaction in respect to himself, the apostle in this and the next verse describes his attitude toward the heathen. "It was part of God's purpose in choosing Israel that they should become the witnesses and teachers of his truth" to the heathen; their sin lay in making a vain boast of their privileges, instead of fulfilling the duty (Gifford). The word "confident" expresses the proud air of assurance with which the Jew set about guiding and enlightening the Gentile, or heathen—now and then winning in such way a Gentile proselyte, thus fulfilling in paltry measure his world-wide mission of witnessing to the nations concerning the truth; and after all, even when the poor Gentile was won he was "twofold more the child of hell" than he was before. Thus did the Jew instruct.

Paul writes as if he had these words of Christ in his mind, and he writes, apparently, as if it were difficult to prevent himself from speaking just as plainly. The similarity of Paul's teaching in this chapter, as well as elsewhere, with Christ's, is very close; and as we study the two side by side we can not help being struck with the profound insight which the former had into the spirit of the teachings of Him whose apostle he was; and this insight, strange as it may seem, has not been appreciated by some otherwise

V. 21:—*Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?*

V. 22:—*Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?*

V. 23:—*Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?*

keen-minded critics of Paulinism. Compare, for instance, on this chapter alone, what Christ says on the outside of the platter as compared with the inside, the whited sepulchers, those who simply say, Lord, Lord, the parable of the wicked husbandmen, etc., all of which was intended to have personal application to the Jews, who would neither enter the kingdom of heaven themselves nor permit the Gentiles to do so in so far as their false teachings and false lives could prevent.

Vs. 21-23. ***Thou therefore.*** The apostle having reminded the Jew, in the preceding verses, of his boasted knowledge and proud pretensions, now turns upon him face to face, as it were: Is it possible that you, O proud teacher of others, is it possible that you teach not yourself? Does not the law which you have forbid stealing? And do you not steal? Do you not also say it is wrong to commit adultery? And do you not commit adultery? and so for the other specifications here mentioned—in all, four: theft, adultery, sacrilege or robbery of temples, and dishonoring of God, this last probably being meant as the summation of the others. Theft and rapine, according to Josephus, were common vices of the Jews (Jewish Wars, v. 26). Our Savior accuses the Pharisees, the most

pretentious sect of Jews, of extortion. See Matt. xxiii. 14-25, and the whole series of woes there pronounced. Sensuality was one of the commonest vices among the Jews, as among Shemitic peoples generally. They pretended to abhor idolatry, but they were not too good to rob heathen temples of their valuable contents; they even converted the courts of the temple of God at Jerusalem into a "den of thieves." Such cases as these may seem to be extreme, but are all professing Christians in these days guiltless of such offenses against God and man? Paul's argument would have been just as good had he instanced less aggravated vices, but it is not likely that it would have had much effect on the obdurate Jewish conscience. To have named a series of "little sins," so to speak, while just as legitimate from a logical point of view, would have left his indictment without weight in the estimation of the Jew. And besides, he could hardly have named a well-known Jewish vice that was not a large one (Ps. l. 16; Isa. lii. 5; Ezek. xxxvi. 18-24). The Church member of to-day might well read these verses, beginning with the 17th, substituting the word "Christian" for "Jew," and add the so-called smaller sins to those which Paul mentions.

The reader should keep in mind the point which Paul is aiming to make, which is, that the Jews on account of their sins are no less the objects of God's intense disapprobation than the Gentiles are on account of theirs—and this, notwithstanding they have God's written law, and hence, that they need a salvation which this law has not furnished, no less than do the Gentiles.

V. 24. *For the name of God is blasphemed.*

V. 24:—*For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.*

V. 25:—*For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.*

Spoken against; just as professing Christians whose lives are far from what they should be may be a reproach to Christ among the heathen or unconverted sinners about them. Instead of being a light to them that are in darkness they are a cause of stumbling.

V. 25. *For circumcision*, etc. The typical Jew to whom Paul represents himself as speaking, may be supposed to have asked at this point: If the fact that we have the law is not a sufficient guaranty of our salvation, is not circumcision, which is the sign of God's covenant with us as his people? No, says Paul, for there is something far more essential to the binding force of the covenant in its true spiritual sense, as distinguished from its mere national sense, than simply the observance of its outward sign. Indeed, circumcision amounts to nothing apart from a circumcised heart—that is, unless the heart be right with God, and its value then consists only in its value as an outward symbol. In the place of Paul's word "circumcision," we might substitute the words partaking the Lord's-supper, or baptism by water, or joining the church; none of these amount to any thing apart from a baptized heart, or a heart united to Christ, or a heart which identifies itself with the "broken body and shed blood" of Christ. This may be plain enough to us, but it was not so evident to the Jew whose spiritual perception had been blunted

V. 26:—*Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?*

by long misuse of the truth. However good a religion may be, as that of the Old Testament, if its outward and formal elements be the ones which are persistently emphasized to the neglect of its spiritual elements, as had long been the case with the Jews, the effect can not be otherwise than exceedingly deleterious. It was against this practical error that the Old Testament prophets from the beginning to the end earnestly sought to guard the Old Testament Israel. In view of which fact, to say nothing of others, it would seem strange that the Jews of Paul's day should have regarded him as such a radical in his views, after all. But they did, nevertheless.

V. 26. *Therefore if the uncircumcision.* By uncircumcision Paul here means the uncircumcised Gentile. *Righteousness of the law.* The righteousness which the law requires. *Shall not his uncircumcision.* The fact that he is uncircumcised and yet has in his heart and life the righteousness which the law requires counts for more than if he were circumcised and had not this righteousness, since, as Paul has just shown, the main thing is, not to be circumcised, but to keep the law. An uncircumcised Gentile who does it is better than a circumcised Jew who does not. Just as we might say, A non-church member, or unbaptized person, whose heart and life are right is vastly more approved of God than a church member whose heart and life are

V. 27:—*And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?*

V. 28:—*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:*

V. 29:—*But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

not right. See our Savior's parable of the two sons, Matt. xxi. 28.

V. 27. ***Uncircumcision which is by nature.*** By which is meant simply the Gentile heathen who has not been circumcised, and is hence not outwardly and technically one of the covenant people. ***Fulfill the law.*** Lives, in outward life and heart in conformity with the will of God so far as known. See verse 14 and note. ***Judge thee.*** Judge the Jew, instead of the Jew's judging him (verse 1). That is, such a heathen has a better right to condemn the Jew (or nominal Christian) than the Jew (or nominal Christian) has to condemn him.

Vs. 28, 29. In these verses Paul states the reason why circumcision in itself avails nothing to the Jew and why uncircumcision in itself avails nothing to the condemnation of the Gentile; the really essential thing to salvation being, not the outward sign, but the inward grace or character, to the possession of which the sign is supposed to testify; though the sign may testify falsely as it only too generally did in the case of the Jew. The uncircumcised Gentile far beyond the limit of the visible Jewish church, if he possessed the inward character and life, was vastly more well-pleasing to God than the Jew, within the

Chap. III., v. 1:—*What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?*

V. 2:—*Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*

pale of the church, who possessed only the outward sign.

A JEWISH OBJECTION.

At this point in his argument Paul anticipates certain objections on the part of the Jew to the principle which he had laid down in the preceding chapter, as being the one according to which God approves or disapproves of men, whether Jews or Gentiles. These questions and answers are a closely constituent part of Paul's argument, and though it is not at all necessary to suppose that he had before him an imaginary Jewish opponent, it is of course necessary to bear in mind that the objections or questions asked are such as a Jew might readily raise. The last questions which he thus puts into the Jew's mouth is in verse 9.

V. 1. (First question). *What advantage then.* The two questions in this verse are only two forms of one and the same, thus: In view of your statement that God judges Jews and Gentiles on the same principle, what advantage has the Jew? Or, in other words, as one becomes a Jew by being circumcised, of what value is this rite?

V. 2. (Answer). *Much every way; chiefly.* A good many advantages have belonged, and still belong to the Jews which the Gentiles do not possess. I need not enumerate them, but first of all, they were

V. 3:—*For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*

V. 4:—*God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*

intrusted with the Old Testament revelations which they now have in written form. Now it is a great advantage and honor to have such a trust, for it furnishes the Jew with certain knowledge of the character and will of God, and of the kind of character and lives he wishes ours to be; and the very fact that this Scripture is a *trust* committed to the Jew implies that it was God's intention that he should use it for the benefit of the heathen no less than of himself.

V. 3. (Answer continued). *For what if some*, etc. This verse is generally regarded as being the words of the imaginary Jew, and on this supposition are variously interpreted. But it seems best to regard them as the direct continuation of the preceding verse, thus: For what if some of the Jews did prove faithless to this trust which was intrusted to them? Shall that make of no effect the faithfulness of God? And then Paul proceeds in the next verse to answer his own question. (This use of faith in the sense of faithfulness is not unknown in the New Testament; see Titus ii. 10, etc.)

V. 4. *God forbid*. Literally, *let it not be*; or, by no means. *Let God be true. . . . Every man a liar*. The words "true" and "liar" in this verse correspond to "faithfulness" and "faithless" in verse 3. Yea, God will remain true or faithful to his promise and purpose of salvation, even though not only

V. 5:—*But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.)*

some Jews, but every Jew, should prove false or faithless to his trust; for if they are faithless, their privileges shall be transferred to another people, and God's faithfulness to his purpose, that in Abraham and his seed should all nations be blessed, shall be vindicated against all who would judge or accuse him of faithlessness. God can not be true to his character and purpose and yet honor those who dishonor him by being false to the pledges implied in the fact that they are parties to the covenant. It was understood at the very outset that the covenant with Israel was a conditional one; *if* ye will be and do so and so, ye shall be my people.

As it is written. Psalm li. 4. Quoted here as showing that even the Jew's faithlessness, or other sins, may be the very means which God will employ to make only the more manifest to all men his faithfulness and righteousness. **Justified.** Vindicated, or shown to be true and fair in all his dealings. **Judged.** Accused of being untrue to his promise and purpose, and unfair in his dealings. The particular aspect of untruthfulness and unfairness, which is here represented as being charged against God, has reference to his dealings with the Jews. But the words may easily have a wider application.

V. 5. (Second question). **If our unrighteousness.** The faithless and false lives of us Jews. (The reference primarily is to the Jews, but the application, of course, is general.) **Commends the righteousness of God.** Vindicates and makes evident God's faith-

V. 6:—*God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?*

fulness and truth, or any other aspect of his character as bearing upon his dealings with men, and all of which are the outflow of his holiness. Now, if God thus uses our unrighteousness, the objector might say, in order to vindicate and make manifest the existence in himself of the opposite attribute, does not the argument destroy itself? Does he not indeed prove himself to be unjust when he punishes the sin which he uses as the sole means of advertising his righteousness? The form of the question in Greek is such as implies a negative answer, and even in this case Paul could not write the question without indicating that he was not asking it in his own capacity, but in that of an objector: "I speak as a man."

V. 6. (Answer). *God forbid.* Let it not be. Paul indignantly repels the imputation which the question makes upon the character of God: "By no means," he says, and his further answer is a condensed syllogism, thus: *Major premise*—If God were unrighteous there could be no final judgment of the world, for the doctrine of a final judgment assumes the justice of the judge.

Minor premise—But you, as do even the pagans, admit there will be a final judgment.

Conclusion—Therefore, you must admit that God is righteous, and the fact that he draws a good result from man's bad deed can not destroy his right to judge that man.

V. 7. (Second objection in another form). *For if.*

V. 7:—*For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?*

V. 8:—*And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.*

The Revised Version, following the oldest Greek manuscripts, reads "but if" instead of "for if;" either reading yields the correct meaning. In the one case the Jewish objector says: I am not satisfied with your answer, *for if* the truth or righteousness of God is made to abound, or be glorified, by sin, it does not seem to me to be right that God should judge me as a sinner. If we take the words "but if," we do not need to supply the words "I am not satisfied with your answer." *The truth of God. . . . My lie.* The truth of God means God as truth, or God considered as true to his own character, of which the central element, we may say, is holiness. He is faithful, just, etc., because he is holy; and he will always be faithful, just, etc., because he will always be true to himself. "My lie," or the "lie of me," is myself as false to God who is my standard of character and life.

V. 8. (Answer). *And not rather.* Paul answers the objection of the Jew, as stated in verse 7, by asking him a question which on its very face answers itself and shows the absurdity of the Jew's objection: Why not say at once, let us do evil that good may come. If I can magnify God's righteousness by sinning, then I ought to sin. That is what your objection, as last stated, amounts to, and you know very well that it is absurd, and that you do not believe it; for did you not severely criticise me when it came to

V. 9:—*What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*

your ears that I was teaching this same pernicious principle? But if your objection drives you, as you see it does, to the acceptance of this false and blasphemous adage, you can see for yourself that the objection is not valid. ***Whose damnation is just.*** That is, the condemnation of those who do evil that good may come, is just. And the Jew, who had just pleaded that God, who derived glory from his sinning, ought not, therefore, to judge him for sinning, must have felt that the condemnation rested particularly upon him.

V. 9. ***What then? are we better than they.*** It is best to regard this question as asked by a Jew, or by Paul as representing a Jew, thus: Well then, since the pre-eminence of the Jews above the Gentiles consists, as you have already stated, in their superior advantages, do you think that we, though not as we should be, are at least in some degree superior to the Gentiles also in respect to piety? The second part of the verse is Paul's very plain and emphatic answer to this question. He affirms that *they are all on a level.*

The above is the meaning of the Vulgate Version, Tyndale's, Cranmer's, the Genevan, and the King James. It is also substantially the view of Luther, Calvin, Beza, Bengel, Macknight, Bloomfield, Alford, Wordsworth, Hodge, Gifford, Tholuck, Jowett, Thayer (Lex.), Abbott, and it is also the view of the American members of the New Testament Revision Committee. The Revised Version reads: Are we (Jews) worse than they (the Gentiles)?

V. 10:—*As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one:*

V. 11:—*There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*

V. 12:—*They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Prof. Godet's view is: "Have we (Jews) a shelter under which we can regard ourselves as delivered from wrath?" with which Dr. Morison seems closely to agree: "Do we Jews bring forward pleas in behalf of ourselves—that is, in bar of a sentence of condemnation against ourselves?"

V. 10-12. *As it is written.* Psalm xiv. 1-3; lili. 1-3. In concluding his proof of the sin and guilt of both Gentiles and Jews Paul quotes, as he often does, the testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures, the evidence of which his Jewish readers would naturally be supposed to regard as altogether valid. But as a matter of fact the Jewish exegesis and application of the Scriptures in Paul's day was exceedingly loose and one-sided; and the great difficulty was to induce them to see and accept the testimony of their own sacred books. The fact that Paul, even with all the supposed exegetical faults which have been attributed to him by rationalistic critics, was so far in advance of the current rabbinical use of the Scriptures proves that he was either under the guidance of the Holy Spirit or an inexplicable prodigy.

There is none righteous, no not one. In the Hebrew, "There is none that doeth good," which is in sense the same. The plain meaning of the words, as used both by the Psalmist and the Apostle, is that

such is the state, not of man, or a set of men, in a given age or country; but that such is man's state by nature always and everywhere; a state of ungodliness; he of one sort morally, God being of another sort; he unrighteous, unholy, etc., God being righteous, holy, etc.; this is the want of harmony or oneness between all men and God; and in order that it may be otherwise man must cease to be what he is by nature and become the opposite by grace. And this last is the point toward which Paul is proceeding. But, to make the moral condition of the natural man only sadder still the next verse informs us that there is no man who, in his natural state adequately and fully appreciates the above stated lamentable facts; so obtuse does sin render his powers of moral or spiritual perception (Romans i. 21); if he could thus adequately appreciate it he would not need the power of the Psalmist's or the Apostle's persuasive logic, or manifold holy influences, or the pleadings of the Holy Spirit, to induce him to seek after God.

V. 12. *Gone out of the way unprofitable.* The idea of the preceding verses is here repeated and strengthened. "Mankind resembles a caravan which has strayed, and is moving in a direction opposite to the right one, and whose members can do nothing (are unprofitable) to help one another in their common misery."—(*Godet.*) Isaiah's figure is that of sheep who have strayed from the leading of the shepherd; turned aside from his way into their way. Isaiah liii. 6.

V. 13. *Their throat is an open sepulcher.* See Psalm v. 9. Their throat is a sepulcher filled

V. 13:—*Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:*

V. 14:—*Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:*

V. 15:—*Their feet are swift to shed blood:*

V. 16:—*Destruction and misery are in their ways:*

V. 17:—*And the way of peace have they not known:*

V. 18:—*There is no fear of God before their eyes.*

with foul corruption, but opened so that from it proceed foul stench. Compare our Savior's words, Matt. xv. 18-20. *The poison of asps.* Psalm cxl. 3.

V. 14. *Whose mouth.* Psalm x. 7. In the preceding verse the throat, the tongue, and the lips; in this verse the whole cavity of the mouth is referred to.

Vs. 15-17. See Isaiah lix. 7, 8.

V. 18. See Psalm xxxvi. 1.

We see that this Old Testament documentary evidence which Paul adduces in favor of his proposition—universal sinfulness—is a compilation from various parts of the Old Testament Scriptures. The whole passage, however, just as given here is found in The Vulgate of Sextus and Clement, in Cranmer's English Version of the Psalms (and hence in the Episcopal Psalter), and in some editions of the Septuagint.

The reader will doubtless observe that in verse 5 of Psalm xiv. from which the first quotations are made, a "generation of the righteous" is mentioned, and that in Luke i. 6, Zacharias and Elizabeth are called "righteous." Does not this invalidate Paul's argument? Certainly not; for neither the Psalmist nor the Apostle is attempting to show that no man is righteous in the sense that no man *can* be righteous, but they both mean that no man is righteous who has

not the righteousness which comes of faith and which consists in faith, or, in other words, who is not "justified by faith." This had been the only way for any man to be saved, or to be righteous, all along through human history, no matter whether he lived within or without the pale of the Mosaic law. The fact which Paul so laments is that man had so utterly lost sight of this way as their corrupt lives and their hearts, so unable to perceive the truth, abundantly proved that they had. The distinguishing feature of Paul's teaching as also that of his Master, Christ, was, not that he attempted to introduce a hitherto unrevealed way to become righteous in God's estimation but, that he brought men's minds back to the old way so repeatedly stated in the Jewish Scriptures, emphasizing and pointing to it more clearly.

It should be observed also that Paul, thus far in his argument is speaking of sin, not as original or native to the human heart, but of the universal *fact* of sin as evinced in its universal manifestation in human life. This wide-spread fact existing, as it does, even among the best informed peoples, would of itself, apart from any consideration of sin's originality in the heart, be abundantly sufficient to render it imperative that both Gentiles and Jews should be urgently called away from their helpless theories of salvation to the old, the true, the only way of being just or righteous before God. The subject of original sin or corruption Paul reserves until we reach chapter v. 12 and following verses.

V. 19. *Now we know.* A form of speech, when addressed by one to an opponent, has the force of: Now you will of course admit. *What things soever.*

V. 19:—*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

As, for instance, the prohibition of such a state of life and conduct as that described in the quotations, verses 10–18. **The law.** The precepts of the Old Testament, whether contained in the Ten Commandments or elsewhere. **It saith to.** It speaks to or addresses to. **Them who are under the law.** Those who have the law and are, as accountable beings, amenable to it. In this instance the Jews are meant.

That. “*In order that,*” not “so that;” the one denotes a purpose, the other an effect or result. The apostle does not mean that the effect or result of having the law is to stop the mouth by taking away the plea of ignorance; this should be its effect, though it seems it did not stop the mouth of the Jew. He means that the law speaks to those who have it in order that they may have no plea for sinning; or in other words, in order that they may be unable to plead “not guilty.” If they should unfortunately though honestly plead “not guilty,” whereas they are guilty, it would be the same thing as saying that they were not sinners. But of course the first thing that a sinner must do in order to salvation is to recognize himself as a sinner. **All the world.** The Jewish world is here particularly meant, though not exclusively, the heathen world being adjudged by the law which they have and which speaks to them. Chapter ii. 14, 15. **May become guilty.** May recognize themselves as guilty and hence as subject to his judg-

V. 20:—*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

ment, or under his condemnation. It is the purpose of the law to produce in man this recognition.

V. 20. **Therefore.** The Greek word is *dióti*; the translation, "therefore," makes the first half of this verse to be the conclusion drawn either from the statement in verse 19, or from the whole preceding course of reasoning beginning back at chapter i. 18. This is a good sense, and is supported by the Genevan Version, and by Beza, Turretin, Macknight, and other commentators. But the word (*dióti*) is nowhere else in the King James version translated "therefore." It occurs in the New Testament twenty-two times, and except in this instance is always rendered *because* or *for*, which amounts to the same thing. The Revised Version renders it *because*, as does also the Vulgate, Tyndale, and Cranmer, and is preferred by Bengel, Bloomfield, Meyer, Lange, Alford, Wordsworth, Hodge, Godet, Morison, and the majority of modern commentators. This rendering makes the meaning to be: Why is it divinely desired that the whole world should, as stated in verse 19, recognize and admit its guilty and polluted condition? Because, says verse 20, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. This rendering is to be preferred.

No flesh. Nobody, no person. **Deeds of the law.** Outward conformity to law. This constitutes a kind of personal righteousness, such as belongs to him whom we call a mere moralist, but it is not the

sort of righteousness which renders a man approved of God, or justified. Hence, there is no contradiction between Paul's statements here and in chapter ii. 13, on which see note. Of the two classes, the true doers and the non-doers of the law, the former are the ones who shall be justified, but the righteousness by which they shall be justified is not the righteousness which proceeds out of the deeds of the law. From this source righteousness can not proceed into the man and become such a constituent element of him as to render him divinely approved. Otherwise we might as well say that a justifying righteousness proceeds into us from the act of baptism, for instance, merely because baptism is a Christ-appointed rite. The righteousness which must displace the righteousness of the mere moralist or legalist, the righteousness which alone can justify us, or, in other words, cause us to become the objects of God's approbation, whereas we had been the objects of his disapprobation, is a righteousness which must come into us, becoming a constituent part of us, from a source which Paul does not mention in this verse. And this is true, *for* by the law is the knowledge of sin; its function is not to justify us, but to produce in us a spiritual recognition or conviction of the fact that we need to be justified; in other words, that we are sinners and hence disapproved of God, or, in other words still, under his condemnation.

SECOND PROPOSITION.

Salvation provided for all and offered to all; or God's saving righteousness to become man's in lieu of man's own legalistic righteousness on condition of

V. 21:—*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets ;*

faith in Jesus Christ by whose atoning work it became possible for God to make the offer (iii. 21 to v. 11).

V. 21. Paul, having now fully shown in the discussion of his first proposition (p. 84), that both Jews and heathens, whether they possess the written law or only the unwritten law on their hearts, are in a state of ungodlikeness, and hence, under divine disapprobation, proceeds to the positive side of his argument and sets forth the only way whereby they may become actually righteous, viz. : by having infused into them the God-righteousness in lieu of any so-called righteousness which they may have supposed they already possessed.

But now. These words mark the contrast between the erroneous conceptions of true righteousness and of the way to be saved which had hitherto prevailed both among Jews and heathen, and the brighter light which is now thrown upon the subject by Jesus Christ and the teachings of his apostles. It is truly a "sweet antithesis."

The righteousness of God. Versus the so-called righteousness of the Jew or heathen, which is not the kind that God likes because it is not like God's. Hence, God-righteousness may be taken as a compound word like self-righteousness or man-righteousness. The former is the kind that "justifies" us, for when God sees that in us which is in himself he approves us. When it is in us it is ours. It is higher, purer, more comprehensive, than the self or man-righteousness. Hence, our Savior said: Except

V. 22:—*Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:*

your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, etc.

Without the law. Apart from law. Law does not enter in any way as an ingredient or element of this God-righteousness; if it exists in man at all it exists in him just as it does in God—that is, as a part of himself, so to speak, his very character; for a man righteous in this sense will do right and refrain from doing wrong whether any law commands him to or not. In this sense also he is free from law. But though this righteousness is apart from law, it is not apart from Christ “for without [or apart from] me ye can do nothing;” apart from him we can not even be “doers of the law.”

Is manifested. More clearly made known, and more freshly set forth in the person and teachings of Christ and his apostles. But Paul is careful to state, as we should be careful to observe, that this God-righteousness as the means of salvation, is not now manifested or made known for the first time. He reminds his Old Testament readers that it ought not to be regarded by them as a new and strange doctrine, for it is abundantly witnessed by the whole Old Testament Scriptures—a fact with which the Jews ought to have been acquainted. They may have read their Bible much, but they did not read it well, and hence, they were blind leaders of the blind. There never was but one way to be saved. Paul was still the true Jew in doctrine, but his brother Jews were not.

V. 22. *Even the righteousness, etc.* This

V. 23:—*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;*

verse further defines the God-righteousness of verse 21; not in its intrinsic nature, but as the God-righteousness which becomes ours through or by means of our faith in Jesus Christ. It is, then, a state, or condition, of ourselves as moral beings, and consists in God-likeness, and implies reconciliation, or the absence of antinomy between ourselves and God. The expression, *the faith of Jesus Christ*, does not mean that this righteousness becomes ours through the *faithfulness* of Jesus Christ, although that is true of course as a matter of fact; it means our faith in him; and this righteousness is manifested to all and becomes the actual possession of all who exercise this faith.

There is no difference. Between Gentile and Jew, nominal Christian and heathen; this righteousness belongs to all alike on the one condition.

V. 23. ***For all have sinned***, etc. That is, there is no difference, etc., for all have sinned. ***And come short.*** This verb is in the present tense; all are fallen short. ***Of the glory of God.*** It is best to regard this "glory of God" as being the same as that mentioned in chapter ii. 7-10, where it is coupled with *honor* and *immortality*, as constituting eternal life. It is, then, in its relation to man, the inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven (1 Peter i. 4). The figure is, that in running the race for this prize all are fallen far short of it, and hence, are unentitled to it. The failure is due to themselves;

V. 24:—*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

they have loitered, or dallied, or turned aside from the way into by-paths. Or, to use plain speech instead of figure, they have been indifferent, or neglectful, or have had wrong theories of the way to attain to the inheritance, to which wrong theories they were blindly attached by their prejudices (particularly true of the Jews and many heathens).

V. 24. *Being justified.* It is better to connect this with verse 22. Unto all them that believe, being justified freely, etc. The God-righteousness becomes ours through our faith in Christ, and then it constitutes our ample justification. But it becomes ours not because we earn it, not because by running we have attained to it, for on the contrary we are fallen short of it and the glorious inheritance which it secures; but it becomes ours as a free and gracious gift of God. We might exercise faith (if such a case be conceivable), and still this righteousness not be ours unless God should graciously see fit to give it to us.

Through the redemption. That is, through the redemption that is in Christ, or through Christ who is our redeemer, we are justified in the sense above explained. Sin is a captivity; Christ redeems or delivers us from it. Sin is a great curse; Christ delivers us from it. Sin is bondage, a grievous slavery; Christ delivers us from it. It cost him much suffering to do it; he even gave his life that he might be our ransom. Sin is viewed in many aspects by Paul, and elsewhere in the New Testament, and Christ

V. 25:—*Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;*

stands in corresponding relation to them all. If sin be our disease, Christ is our physician. If sin be our death, Christ is our life. If sin be our lost condition, Christ is our way. If sin be "the lie," Christ is "the truth." If sin be a power which has dread mastery over us, Christ is again our deliverer. But we must bear in mind that the sin which has dominion over me is not in fact one thing and myself another thing. It is only so viewed by way of figure. The sin which has dominion over me is, in a sense, myself. And when I am delivered from this self then I am judicially justified, or declared to be justified, because then I actually am just or righteous; and I am not justified, in the sense of being acquitted, until *I am* just or righteous, and I am righteous as soon as I am redeemed.

V. 25. *Hath set forth.* Not, set forth in the sense of "designed" or "foreordained;" nor does it mean set forth in the sense of "formerly revealed;" it means to set forth in the sense of to exhibit, or set publicly forth so that all may behold him.

To be a propitiation. The Greek word here is *hilastarion*, and occurs in the New Testament only in this verse and in Hebrews ix. 5, where it is rendered *mercy-seat*. Many authorities regard the word as an adjective, and many others regard it as a noun. The views as to its meaning in this verse are almost without number. A few illustrations may be given:

1. *Propitiator or reconciler.* Thus some editions of the Vulgate, Erasmus, Cajetan, Melanchthon.

2. *A propitiation.* Thus our King James Version, Beza, Melville, the Geneva Version.

3. *Mercy-seat.* Origen, Theodoret, Luther, Tyn-dale, Calvin, Grotius, Coccejus, Vitringa, Macknight, Olshausen, Lange, Abbott, and many others.

4. *Propitiatory sacrifice.* Meyer, Le Clerc, Moses Stuart, Alford, Conybeare, Bloomfield.

5. *Propitiatory.* Whom God set publicly forth as propitiatory, not exclusively as a propitiatory sacrifice, but as propitiatory in his whole theanthropic personality. This is Dr. Morison's view.

Christ is set forth as the one who by his intermingled work and suffering has power to render God (objectively) propitious. God always loved man. He was always intrinsically propitious, but through Christ he can be outwardly so in his actual dealing with the sinner. But it would be better, perhaps, to avoid the distinction here made between intrinsic propitiousness and outward or actual propitiousness by calling the former simply love and only the latter propitiousness. With this understanding of terms we may easily see that God could not have been propitious independently of Christ, and of what he did and suffered. It was he who by the propitiatory element in him made redemption from sin in all its aspects possible; and having made redemption possible, he therein made possible justification in its judicial sense; or, in other words, he therein made possible the removal from us of God's disapprobation. Being sinners, God at the same time loved us and intensely disapproved or condemned us. So long as we approve of sin, so long must God disapprove us, so long must his con-

demnation rest upon us; for in approving sin, relishing it, enjoying it, we identify ourselves with it; we make sin and ourselves one. God can never look upon sin in the abstract, or sin as ourselves, "with the least degree of allowance;" and the only way whereby we can have God look upon us with allowance, or propitiously, is to identify ourselves with Christ who is set forth as a propitiator or means of propitiation. The next clause in the verse tells us how this identification of ourselves with Christ is to be effected; or, which amounts to the same thing, how that which is propitiatory in Christ becomes available to each sinner.

Through faith in his blood. By means of faith the object to which the faith is directed, or in which it rests, being "his blood." Christ is a possible propitiatory means to every sinner, but he is not one actually to any given sinner, except through the sinner's faith. ***In his blood.*** The use of this expression here and elsewhere by Paul (Rom. v. 9; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 20, etc.) indicates the emphasis which he places upon *the blood* as an element of Christ's propitiatory work; sometimes, both in the Gospels and Epistles, it is simply faith "in Christ," but it is Christ in his totality; and whatever may be the particular aspect emphasized, "faith in Christ," "faith in his blood," etc., it is always a personal identification with Christ that is meant, the identification of ourselves with sin ceasing. It is conceivable that the incarnate Christ at the close of his public ministry might have returned to the right hand of the Father in any one of three ways; (1) by transfiguration, (2) through the gate of natural death, (3) death by violence. The third is the only one that could have prevented his

life-work from being practically, at least, a failure. Whether, therefore, we translate the word (*hilastarion*) mercy-seat, or propitiatory, or propitiation, in any case Christ in his entirety is the only ground on which we can hope for redemption from sin and the consequent justification.

To declare his righteousness. To prove or demonstrate his righteousness; no allusion here to a payment offered to justice in compensation for the death which sinful men have merited. **For the remission.** Because of, or on account of, the remission. The word here rendered "remission" is not the usual word for forgiveness or remission of sins. The word here means to pretermitt, to pass by, to tolerate, to seem not to notice; the usual word means to forgive after having taken due notice of, to take away the sin or charge against one, to remit. **That are past.** The sins of the past ages of mankind which God, during his long time of forbearance, pretermitted, or seemed to take little notice of.

So then we may paraphrase the whole verse: Being justified . . . by means of the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth publicly as propitiatory, or as a means of propitiation, the cause in us which renders it available to us being our faith, and the cause in it which renders it effective being his blood; and the reason why God thus set forth Christ as a means of propitiation was that he might demonstrate or vindicate his righteousness against the charge that he had taken no notice of the sins of the past ages of mankind.

There is no implication, however, that God had not in Old Testament times forgiven the sins of many in the same sense and on the same ground that he for-

gives now; but he had done it, so far as was apparent to mankind, on the basis only of a *pledged* propitiation; and so long as this pledge should remain unfulfilled the forgiveness could not from man's stand-point be anything more than a pretermission, or passing by, or overlooking, of the sins. But when the propitiation should cease to be a promise, and become an actual fulfillment, then and ever thereafter would the righteousness of God, his absolute antithesis to all sin and disorder, be fully known.

But with this difficult and deeply significant scripture before us, and in order that we may inquire yet further into its meaning, may we not ask: If it had been possible for a man to be of a humble and contrite spirit, hating the sin of which he is possessed, independently of any such proof of God's righteousness, either in promise or actually, would it have been possible for him to find acceptance with God? The case is supposable, for many heathen, before Christ and since, have never known any thing of any such proof of God's righteousness. Hence we answer that it would have been possible for such a sinner to find acceptance with God, but it would have been a matter of pure trust on his part, as he had no proof or demonstration of God's righteousness whatever; but it would not have been possible apart from Christ—Christ in his totality of person and work. But as the public setting forth of Christ referred to in this verse was postponed four thousand years without destroying its validity and efficacy, so might it have been postponed four thousand years more, or even until the end of the world.

V. 26. *At this time.* The righteousness of God

V. 26:—*To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

V. 27:—*Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.*

had not formerly been so demonstrated, and the object of setting forth the propitiation at this time is to prove the righteousness of God, both in respect to the past, and, as stated in this verse, in respect to the present and all time to come.

That he might be just, etc. That he might be known or recognized as righteous even in removing his condemnation from the one believing in Jesus, and in placing upon him his approbation. Luther's and Calvin's idea is: That he alone might be righteous, and the one making him righteous who believes in Jesus.

V. 27. *Where is boasting then.* In view of the preceding considerations, especially of the statements in verses 25, 26, where is the vainglorying of Gentiles and Jews?—glory in any other ground of salvation than that of the work of Christ; the Jews in their self-righteousness, the Gentiles in their wisdom (1 Cor. i. 20). The Jews, however, seem to be here particularly referred to.

It is excluded. Shut out; there is no reason whatever for vainglorying. *By what law*, or principle of action, is this vainglorying of Jew and Gentile shut out? *Of works?* Has it been barred out by a law which enjoins works? No; for such a law rather tends to encourage self-righteousness and self-praise. It is excluded by the law which enjoins faith or the personal acceptance of the righteousness which God would graciously impart to us through Christ.

V. 28:—*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

V. 29:—*Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:*

V. 30:—*Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*

V. 28. *Therefore we conclude.* In view, not merely of verse 27, but of the whole preceding reasoning, we conclude, etc. The principle here stated has already been explained as it appeared in former verses.

Without the deeds of law. Apart from the deeds of the law. Righteousness comes to us, becomes ours, not merely ours, but a part, so to speak, of our very selves, by divine impartation or regeneration through Christ, and not out of our deeds.

V. 29. *Is he the God of the Jews only.* Is God the God of the Jews only? No; as you will readily admit, he is the God of the heathen also; hence I rightly said “a man,” “any man,” in verse 28; for the statement applies alike to all men.

V. 30. *It is one God.* Or, rather, seeing that God is one who shall, etc. That God is the only one was a fundamental article of the Jewish religion, and hence the Jews would be compelled to admit that he was God over the Gentiles also, and must justify both on the same principle—the one “by faith,” the other “through faith.” *By faith* is literally out of faith; *through faith* means *by means of* faith. So far as the Jew’s becoming righteous depended upon himself the source of his righteousness was his faith and not his circumcision; so far as the Gentile’s depended upon

V. 31 :—*Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

himself he obtained it by means of his faith, and the fact that he was uncircumcised was no hindrance.

V. 31. *We establish the law.* Instead of the law being made of no effect by the teaching of verse 30, it is only the more firmly established thereby, and in two ways; (1) by taking away from it the function of producing righteousness which the Jews had erroneously attributed to it, and relegating it to its proper function of revealing sin and guiding to Christ; (2) by implanting in us the principle of spiritual or heart obedience to it, in lieu of the *mere formal* or outward obedience. If the law has our heart's respect and allegiance, it is more firmly established than if it had not.

THE CASE OF ABRAHAM.

Having in the preceding section elaborated his doctrine of salvation by grace through faith versus the doctrine of salvation by the works of the law, Paul proceeds to further establish his thesis by considering the Old Testament testimony concerning Abraham. There could not be any doubt in the mind of the Jew that Abraham was approved of God, and hence saved. Now, if Paul could show that he was approved on his theory or doctrine of salvation, and not on that of the Jew, the honest Jew could not fail to see that the argument was altogether against him.

But Paul does even more than this: He shows that Abraham owed not only his righteousness, but his inheritance, and also his posterity, to his faith; and then

Chap. IV., v. 1:—*What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?*

V. 2:—*For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.*

he applies Abraham's case to us also who believe, etc. We may, therefore, exhibit the contents of this chapter as follows:

1. Abraham's righteousness due to his faith. Vs.

1-12.

2. Abraham's inheritance due to his faith. 13-16.

3. Abraham's posterity due to his faith. 17-22.

4. The case applied to believers of the present.
23-25.

Vs. 1, 2. *What shall we say then.* In view of the exclusion of boasting, or glorying, on the part of the Jew, and of the equality before God of Jews and Gentiles, what shall we say? etc. The words "as pertaining to the flesh" are to be construed with "Abraham our father." The question is one which a Jew does not really ask, for he would scarcely have called Abraham "our fleshly father;" but Paul puts the question, as it were, in the mouth of a Jew, and in doing so shapes it as he wishes, making Abraham their *fleshly* father, because of the point he will make after a while that Abraham is the *spiritual* father of believing Gentiles; and that, after all, it is better to have him for one's spiritual father than to have him merely as one's *fleshly* father. Such is the construction called for by the King James and Revised Versions. It is proper to say, however, that the American Revision Committee, and many commentators, as Bengel, Macknight, Conybeare, Godet, Meyer, Hodge,

V. 3:—*For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

V. 4:—*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.*

Clarke, etc., would rather read: That Abraham, our father, hath found or gained by the fleshly ordinance. The other view seems to me to be preferable, as being entirely in harmony with the whole course and spirit of Paul's argument which, as Alford truly says, "is not to limit the paternity of Abraham to a mere fleshly one, but to say that he was the spiritual father of all believers." With this view agree Gifford, Lange, Calvin, Locke, Chrysostom, etc.

Hath found. Which kind of righteousness hath he found, that of faith or that of works; for if he was justified by works, as we Jews hold, he has cause to glory, and hence glorying is not excluded (iii. 27). But Paul interprets: He may have cause for glorying in the estimation of the Jews, but not before God, for the righteousness which he obtained was not that of works, but that of faith—a statement, too, which I make (he says) on the evidence of your own scripture, *for what saith the Scripture?* It says this:

V. 3. ***Abraham believed God.*** Had faith in God, independently of any promise, even when God's command was apparently in deadly opposition to his promise, as in the case of the sacrifice of Isaac. ***And it was counted.*** The faith was reckoned to him for righteousness because it was righteousness.

V. 4. ***To him that worketh,*** etc. In the case of one that works for hire what he receives is earned, and not a matter of gracious bestowal. This is a prin-

V. 5:—*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

ciple of common life, which applies no less truly in the spiritual.

V. 5. *But to him that worketh not.* To him who works not for hire whatever he receives is received as an expression of grace or favor. So there are only two supposable ways of obtaining righteousness; one way is for a man to make himself righteous, the other is for God to make him so. If he makes himself righteous by his own works; or, to put it otherwise, if his righteousness consists in his works, it is something for which he owes no thanks to God; but if God makes him righteous, his righteousness is a matter of grace, and the only condition, as stated in this and verse 3, as well as elsewhere, is his faith; and because he has faith God regards him as righteous. That is, God regards him as righteous because he is so. If this seems to be the same as saying that the condition of man's righteousness is his righteousness, it is only because of the double senses in which the usage or weakness of language renders it necessary for us to employ words. A man's having righteousness is the only condition upon which to be righteous, and the only condition upon which he can be declared so, and thought so, or counted so. Abraham had this righteousness, all the elements of which may be summed up in the one word "faith;" and God counted, or regarded, it just as acceptable and pleasing to him as if Abraham had made himself righteous by his works—far more so, indeed, for mere

V. 6:—*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,*

outward conformity to law did not necessarily in any case touch the inward character, whereas the other did. But, to make the matter still clearer and more conclusive in regard to Abraham, he was declared to be righteous on account of his faith long before there was any law or ordinance of circumcision—while he was yet a Gentile, as it were.

V. 6. *Even as David.* This is not a new argument, but a quotation from another great and favorite Jewish character confirmatory of the argument drawn from Abraham's case. See Psalm xxxii.

Impute. This word occurs in this and verse 8—to “impute righteousness,” to “impute sin;” it does not, of course, mean “to impart,” for the Psalmist could not speak of the Lord as imparting or not imparting sin. It is the same word which in verses 3, 5, is rendered “counted.” It is the translation of the Hebrew word (*hashak*) meaning to think, regard, or consider. God “imputes” righteousness to one apart from his legalistic works in the sense that he regards him as, or thinks of him as, righteous apart from such works. But he does not regard him as righteous apart from what the apostle calls “faith,” and the Psalmist “a guileless spirit.” The words “without works” do not occur in the Psalm, but the apostle regards them as being plainly implied, for if the works were all right there would then be no need of forgiveness; but there is need of forgiveness (see next verse); hence the “works” instead of being right are wrong. Therefore the righteousness is not acquired;

V. 7:—Saying, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

V. 8:—*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

hence it is gratuitously imparted; and hence, again, God can truly think of the man as righteous because he made him so.

Vs. 7, 8. ***Iniquities.*** This is the word which may particularly suggest the phrase “without works” (of the law), at the end of verse 6. The Greek word means things done contrary to law, or transgressions. No sin can be committed, whether of omission or commission, without the law being transgressed, and when it is desired to view sin in this aspect it is called transgression. ***Forgiven.*** To forgive sin is to remit or take away sin, as the Greek word here, and its synonym elsewhere, means. ***Covered.*** Our sins are said to be covered when they are pardoned, or, in other words, when they are concealed, as it were, from the divine eye, so that he no longer sees them as a charge against us for which we are to be punished. “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;” and they are *not imputed* when they are thought of as if they had not been committed; and they are thus thought of because they are taken away and pardoned. They are remembered against us no more; he has cast them behind his back; as far as the east is from the west so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. These are familiar Old Testament expressions which correspond respectively “to forgive” and “to pardon.” Sin, considered in its relation to the divine will, is called guilt, and to this aspect of it the word cover, or pardon, is more especially applicable; and

V. 9:—*Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.*

V. 10:—*How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.*

V. 11:—*And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:*

V. 12:—*And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*

when it is pardoned the divine condemnation or disapprobation is removed from us, and we are said to be "cleared," acquitted, or justified, or approved, because we are actually no longer guilty of that in respect to which we had hitherto been the objects of condemnation. Hence, the Bible sometimes speaks of our guilt being canceled. Sin, viewed in its relation to the divine holiness, is called pollution, and hence such words as "filthy rags," "uncleanliness," "putrefying sores," etc., and the corresponding words "to cleanse," "to wash," "to purge," "to take away," etc. Of course the fundamental idea is practically the same throughout; but it is often necessary to distinguish these various aspects of the subject in order to appreciate the language of the Scriptures and avoid confusion of thought. Sin is an awful thing, and must be looked at from many points of view in order to be somewhat adequately seen. It can never be wholly seen until we can see it as God sees it.

Vs. 9-12. In these verses Paul shows (1) that this blessedness of Abraham, which consists in being righteous and regarded as righteous, is not in any way to be attributed to his circumcision, it being expressly stated that he was so regarded before his circumcision; and that instead of his righteousness being due to his circumcision, his circumcision was due to his righteousness, and was only the outward sign and seal of it.

He shows (2) that the blessedness of such righteousness was not, therefore, intended to be restricted to those who were circumcised, but was equally the privilege of the uncircumcised who should have a like faith with Abraham's.

V. 11. *The father of all them that believe.* The spiritual father as distinguished from the fleshly father of the Jews, as suggested in note on verse 1.

V. 12. *And the father of circumcision.* Abraham received the sign of circumcision, and subsequently to his being declared righteous, for two purposes. The first is stated in the latter part of the preceding verse; the second is here stated, namely, that he might be not merely the fleshly but also and especially the spiritual father of those Jews who were not only circumcised, but also and especially had a like faith with Abraham. Hence, we may add, his being the spiritual father of the uncircumcised Gentiles who have faith, and the circumcised Jews who have faith, makes him the spiritual father of all the faithful, and it makes all the faithful brethren.

V. 13. *Heir of the world.* Abraham's inher-

V. 13:—*For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

V. 14:—*For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:*

itance. What is here meant by "the world?" The Land of Canaan, as a type of the universal dominion of the Messiah, say Meyer and many other commentators. The earthly Canaan and its antetype, the heavenly, say Macknight and others. The land of Canaan, and all that was embraced in the various promises, Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 17, 18; xxvi. 3, 4 (Ps. ii. 8)—all of which was *promised* to Abraham, and hence his heirship was not *earned* by his obedience. This seems to be essentially the view of Godet, and it is the preferable one. The promise will reach its complete fulfillment "when the kingdoms of the world are given to the people of the Most High, and Christ will rule with his saints for ever and ever;" Dan. ii. 27, etc. (*Schaff*).

V. 14. *For if*, etc. The meaning may be best presented by a paraphrase: What I said in the preceding verse is true; for if the heirship of the world is earned by obedience to law, faith is emptied of all its substance, and there can be no significance in those scriptures in which it is said his faith was counted to him for righteousness; and more than this, the promise to Abraham and to his seed becomes of no effect whatever, for what one has earned by works is bestowed not as a matter of promise, but as wages due.

V. 15. *Because the law*, etc. Another reason

V. 15:—*Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.*

V. 16:—*Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,*

is assigned why Abraham's heirship or inheritance could not have been through the law; for the outcome of the law is wrath. Then follows an explanation of why this is so: ***Where no law is there is no transgression***, and where no transgression is there is no punishment or wrath. The opposite is implied, that where there is law there is sure to be transgression, and hence wrath.

The Revised Version, and many commentators on the authority of several fourth century manuscripts, read "but" instead of "for," in which case the apostle's meaning becomes: Because the law worketh wrath, *but* where no law is there is no transgression—that is, where the promise is there is no transgression, and hence no wrath. The opposites are law *versus* promise, wrath *versus* heirship or inheritance; if the law works wrath, it can not work inheritance; if the promise does not work wrath, it does work inheritance. The two readings yield the same sense, but as an argument the latter is simpler and more forcible.

V. 16. ***Therefore***, etc. Having proved that the inheritance is a matter of promise, not a thing earned by works, the apostle now says: In order that the bestowment of the inheritance might proceed from grace on God's part, therefore it is caused to proceed from faith on man's part to the end that the promise might be sure of fulfillment to all of Abraham's

V. 17:—(*As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were:*

V. 18:—*Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.*

spiritual seed; for it is certain that there could have been no bestowment had it been conditioned on obedience, because no man could possibly have thus earned it.

That which is of the law, means the believing Jews. *That which is of the faith of Abraham*, means the believing Gentiles.

V. 17. *As it written.* This quotation from Gen. xvii. 5, is made in proof of the statement just made that Abraham is the father of us all. *Before him.* Before God, or in the sight or estimation of God. Abraham is the spiritual father of us all before God, *who quickeneth the dead.* The promise that Abraham should be the father of many nations was made when he was old, and Isaac was not yet born; but the present tense "quickeneth," "calleth," presents these facts as if they were at the time actually being accomplished. Isaac was the child of miracle. Abraham's faith in God was such as to enable him to embrace the fact that God could overcome nature.

V. 18. *Against hope believed in hope.* This strong apparent contradiction (oxymoron) means simply that Abraham, having no natural ground of hope for the fulfillment of the promise, believed that God by his almighty power could make dead nature

V. 19:—*And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:*

V. 20:—*He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

work its fulfillment, and also that he would do so, ***That he might become.*** To the end that he might become. This was the end not only to which God looked, but also to which Abraham looked.

V. 19. ***Being not weak in the faith.*** Being strong in the faith. ***He considered not his own body,*** etc. That is, the thought of the deadness of his body was no obstacle to his faith. Gen. xvii. 15-21. The Revised Version, Godet, Gifford, and others, on the evidence of strong external authority, omit the word "not," and read: He considered the deadness of his body . . . but staggered not in his faith. The meaning is evidently the same in either case, for of course the text as it stands in the King James and Received Greek Text does not imply that Abraham was not aware of the deadness of his body and of Sarah's womb.

V. 20. ***Giving glory to God.*** Admitting and depending upon his almighty power over physical nature, as stated in the next verse. The glory which Abraham gave to God was that he could and that he would fulfill the promise—the glory of faithfulness (or truth) and power. ***Was strong in faith.*** The word rendered "was strong," rather means to wax or grow strong. His faith grew strong by trial, rising equal to every emergency. A doubt-

V. 21:—*And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

V. 22:—*And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

ing man is a weak, staggering, man; a man of strong faith is a strong man.

V. 22. *And therefore.* That is, Because he had strong faith in God and thus gave glory to God, and therein was pleasing to God, his faith was counted or reckoned in his favor as righteousness. To “impute” does not mean to mentally attribute to one that which he has not. Abraham had very strong faith, and it was his faith that was “imputed” to him, and in God’s thought or estimation it was righteousness; hence it must really have been righteousness. The only two supposable ways, according to Paul, whereby a man could be constituted righteous are by his works or by his faith. If his faith constitutes him righteous, and this righteousness is merely imputed righteousness, in the sense of a kind of make-believe righteousness, then we must use the same formula of words in respect to works, and say God imputed his works as righteousness—that is, he was not really righteous by his works, but God merely thought of him as righteous; and hence in neither of the only two supposable ways can man become really righteous. But the object of the Epistle to the Romans is to prove that by works a man can not be righteous or approved of God, and hence that by his faith he can be.

Vs. 23-25. Abraham’s case applied to present be-

V. 23:—*Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;*

V. 24:—*But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

V. 25:—*Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.*

lievers. ***For his sake alone.*** That is, this fact that it was his faith which constituted him righteous in God's sight, as the statement of a principle, does not apply to Abraham merely, but it applies to and was written for the encouragement of all who have a like faith with Abraham. Faith, it should be observed, here denotes not so much the act of believing as the habitual state or character of Abraham in his relation to God and spiritual things.

V. 24. ***To us also.*** To all believers. ***To whom it shall be imputed.*** A like faith with Abraham's shall be in God's sight a like righteousness, no matter who it is that has such faith, whether Jew or heathen. ***That raised up Jesus.*** The test of Abraham's faith-relation to God was the promise that a seed should be raised up from his dead loins in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. The test of our faith-relation to God is that he "raised up Jesus from the dead." The test in our case is no more difficult than in Abraham's, for it is a miracle in both.

V. 25. ***Who was,*** etc. The apostle here states why the test of our faith-relation is that God raised up Jesus from the dead, rather than some other miracle. ***Was delivered for our offenses.*** Was

delivered by the Father (chap. viii. 32), or by himself, acting in accordance with the will of the Father, on account of, or because of, our trespasses, as the word "offenses" here means. There is no sin that is not a trespass; and to call sin a trespass is to view it in one of its many aspects. Christ is our "trespass offering." Paul here states that the Jesus whose divine resurrection we are to believe is the Jesus who was delivered unto death on account of our offenses. *For our justification.* On account of our justification. If Jesus be not risen we are yet in our sins (1 Cor. xv. 17); if we are not yet in our sins—that is, if we are justified, then Jesus is risen, and he is risen because of our justification. If our sins guaranteed (so to speak) his death, the fact that his death accomplished the intended result (our justification) guaranteed his resurrection. For if he had been such a Jesus as that his death could not have accomplished the intended result, he would also have been such a Jesus as God would not have raised from the dead.

Paul, both in the Acts and in his Epistles, uniformly lays great stress on the evidential value of the resurrection, as well as on the Savior as risen. We can not believe that he who was crucified was the Savior without believing that he was raised, nor can we believe the latter without believing the former. So far as the death of Christ stood in relation to God, it would have accomplished its purposed result, we may suppose, even though he had returned to the Father forever immediately at the moment of his death, without his body ever being raised; but so far as it stood in relation to man, his death would have been in vain without his resurrection. Hence, Paul sometimes at-

tributes redemption to his death, and sometimes to his resurrection, from which we may certainly infer that in some sense both were necessary. The complete Christ Jesus was necessary to constitute a complete Savior—complete in his personality, in his office, and in his work. But in the verse before us the word *for* (*dia with the accusative*) in the two expressions “for our offenses,” and “for our justification,” can not of itself determine the *nature* of the connection between our offenses and his death, or our justification and his resurrection. The word simply states a connection, and we must infer that it was necessary, as neither the death nor the resurrection were mere incidents which might as well not have occurred.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE BELIEVER.

(Chap. V., 1-11.)

This chapter naturally divides itself into two principal parts; the first ending with verse 11, the second continuing to the end of the chapter. In the first part we have the conclusion of the discussion of the Second Proposition, begun in chapter iii. 21. Commentators differ as to the special teaching of these eleven verses. Lange, Olshausen, and others, hold that the purpose of the apostle is to set forth the fruits of the justification, or righteousness, which as he has shown, is offered to all, and may be the actual possession of all on condition of faith. These fruits, they say, are *peace*, *hope* of glory, *patience*, etc. Others hold that the apostle's purpose is to show that the salvation which has become the present possession of the believer is also a sufficient and final salvation;

Chap. V., v. 1:—*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

sufficient and final because the continued preservation of the believer in the saved state and its final consummation are certain. There is, therefore, no longer any ground for apprehension of divine wrath, or of fear that his justification will not be valid in the day of judgment. It seems to me that this is the more correct of the two views. Paul does not mean to call the attention of his readers to the *fruits* of justification *as such*, but rather to the nature of justification in respect to its sufficiency as a present and final security against the wrath of God.

V. 1. *Therefore being justified.* The meaning is: Inasmuch, therefore, as we are justified by faith in the manner and in the sense set forth in the preceding section, we are transferred out of our former state of unrest and fear into a state of peace in respect to God. We have no need to indulge evil forebodings as to whether this sentence of approbation which God has pronounced upon us will be suddenly and arbitrarily revoked at some future time, or at the last day.

As between the two readings "we have peace," in the King James Version, and "let us have peace," in the Revised Version, the former is to be preferred. It is not an exhortation, but a declaration that we do have peace. Peace is henceforth our right. There is absolutely no longer any ground for unrest or fearful apprehension.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ. That is, it is through or by means of the ever-living Christ that

V. 2:—*By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

V. 3:—*And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience;*

we have now, and shall ever have, this peace with God. "My peace I give unto you."

V. 2. *By whom also.* Through whom also. The verb "we have," in verse 1, is in the present tense; we have now and ever have peace; the verb "we have" in this verse is in the perfect tense. The meaning is, through whom also we have had, etc. We have already, at some past time, through Jesus Christ as the way, had access to the favor or approbation of God in which we now are, and in which we shall abide. These words are addressed to believers.

And rejoice. The Revised Version here also unnecessarily reads "let us rejoice." Not only do we have peace, but we also do have as our privilege the joyful hope of all the blessings which may be summed up in the words "the glory of God."

Notice that Christ is presented in this and the former verse as being the one through whom (1) we have had and continually have access to that grace or favor of God which consists in the possession of his approbation, or, in other words, justification; (2) as the one through whom we have peace.

V. 3. *Not only so, but.* We do even more than rejoice in hope, we rejoice in tribulation. The word "we glory" in this verse, is the same as "we rejoice" in verse 2. This does not mean that we rejoice because of our tribulations, but in spite of them, or in the midst of them; so that it is possible for the be-

V. 4:—*And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*

liever to "rejoice alway;" Phil. iv. 4; Matt. v. 11, 12. Macknight, Bloomfield, and others, have observed that the apostle dwells on this subject of rejoicing in affliction because the Jews thought that adversity was a mark of God's displeasure, and that it ill suited the kingdom of their Messiah. The words, therefore, are especially well calculated to encourage his Jewish-Christian readers.

Tribulation worketh patience. Only that grows which is exercised. Afflictions call our patience into exercise, and thereby develop it more and more. Knowing that good may come to him from life's severe pressures, the Christian may, after all, rejoice not only in spite of them, but in a certain sense because of them, and this, although no chastening in itself, "seemeth good for the present." See 2 Cor. iv. 17, which verse Paul had written before he sent these words to the Romans.

V. 4. ***Experience.*** This word here means probation, or proof. Patient endurance of trials is a test of our character as Christians. The word here rendered "experience" also means approbation, and to obtain the apostle's meaning more clearly we should rather combine the two, probation and approbation. Patient endurance of trials is such a test or proof of character as shows the character to be approved of God. And as this patience can be wrought into the character, not by oral teaching, but only by actual affliction, so neither can the character be otherwise tested. He who has never been tried does not know himself, and hence to this extent he has no valid

V. 5:—*And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

V. 6:—*For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

V. 7:—*For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.*

V. 8:—*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

V. 9:—*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

ground for hope or expectation of a glorious future with God. But the moment this hope is produced in him, then may he begin to rejoice; and thus we are brought back to the apostle's statement in verse 2.

V. 5. *And hope maketh not ashamed.* That is, this hope shall not end in disappointment, and the reason why it shall not end in disappointment is the fact that God himself is the source of it; and that God is the source of it is shown by the further fact that he is the object of God's love; and he may know himself to be the object of God's love by the fact that he has the Holy Spirit in him, who is the medium through whom God reveals his love for us in our hearts ever illuminating and warming our inmost lives. Hence, there need be no apprehension on the part of the one justified by faith of finding himself to be the object of God's disapprobation at the day of judgment.

Vs. 6-9. *For when*, etc. In these verses the apostle further confirms his statement that the believer's hope of final salvation is well grounded. If when we were yet without strength to earn salvation

by the works of the law, as the Pharisees say we must do ; if while we were yet in an unjustified state ; if Christ so loved us as to die for us while we were yet ungodly ; much more, etc., see verse 9.

V. 6. *Without strength.* Not without strength to commit sin, but without strength to deliver ourselves from sin ; unable to acquire salvation by obedience to the law. *In due time.* The apostle simply tells us that at the right time Christ died for the ungodly ; he does not tell us why it was that God considered it to be the right time. Several reasons might be suggested, but the reader may perhaps easily think of them for himself. We may be sure that God never does any thing either too soon or too late. But man himself is a factor in the redemption of his own race ; and had the human race, with or without conscious reference thereto, more speedily adjusted itself to God's redemptive work the "fullness of time" might have arrived sooner than it did. As man may now hasten the answer to his own prayer that Christ may soon come again to the world in yet greater display of power and glory, so might it have been possible for man to have hastened the time of his first coming.

V. 7. *Righteous man.* One who acts simply according to the requirements of justice. *Good man.* One who is not simply just, but also kind and benevolent. For the former one would hardly die, for the latter one might possibly die. But God's love excels this. See next verse.

V. 8. *Commendeth.* Exhibits, or manifests. *His love.* In contrast with the human love of verse 7, Paul is not meaning here to affirm or deny that God's

gift of his Son to die for sinful man stood in any relation to his justice. Whatever else it may have been, the apostle here simply declares that it was an act of God's love, as Christ himself says in John iii. 16. But neither love nor justice is any thing apart from God who is justice and who is love. God as justice can not do any thing which God as love forbids; nor can God as love do any thing which God as justice forbids. God is one Being, and there is no conflict in his nature; and he is subject to no law, or compulsion, or necessity, extraneous to himself. But truth is many sided; and in order to reveal its several aspects it may be necessary at one time to speak of it in relation to God considered as one who loves, and at another in relation to him considered as one who is just. The human sense of justice with which God himself has endowed us will not allow us to believe that it would have been just in God to permit a corrupt race of beings, without any concurrence of their own wills, continually to be born into the world, and yet provide for them no way of salvation. And we know that God did not do this. Had there been any inscrutable reason why he could not provide salvation for fallen man he would not have created him in the first place, much less would he have permitted the race to continue and multiply.

Christ died for us. The word here rendered "for," as in verse 7, means *in our behalf*. Here again the apostle presents one aspect of a truth so large that it can not be expressed by one word; Christ also died "on account of us," "on account of our sins," etc. And in a sense, he also died "in our stead," or in our place. That is, he died that we might not die eternally; and whatever one does in behalf of, or for

the benefit of, another, he does vicariously, or in other words, disinterestedly. But what one does vicariously for another, is not necessarily done as a substitute in such a sense that the other person can not also do the same for himself, though instances are quite conceivable in which such might be the case. Christ suffered in order that I might not suffer the eternal punishment of sin; but to say this, does not require us also to say that Christ himself suffered this punishment. But if there had never been any sin Christ would not have suffered, neither would I. Christ suffered on account of sin as it existed in others; I, on account also of my own. Christ's sufferings were unselfish, disinterested, which is to say, they were vicarious; mine are not, only in so far as I voluntarily suffer in order to prevent, or relieve, another from suffering. So Christ suffered and died for the ungodly; and this is what we mean when we say that he died in their stead. The ungodly ones who never by faith accept Christ, or identify themselves with Christ, will also suffer eternally in their own place. But in the verse before us the apostle makes no allusion to penalty, or to the nature of Christ's death in any respect; his purpose here is simply to say that it was purely a disinterested act, being induced by no selfish consideration whatever.

God commendeth his love to us in that *Christ* died for us. God regarded the sacrifice of Christ as the sacrifice of himself.

V. 9. ***Much more then.*** These words refer back to verse 6, the idea of which is restated in verse 7. ***Being justified by his blood.*** This is not a contradiction of chapter iv. 25, wherein it is said that he

V. 10:—*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

was *raised* again for our justification. "His blood" refers to the death of verse 8. "Being justified," or being put into a state of justification, stands in contrast with being *sinner*s of verse 8. If God could so deal with us while we were yet sinners as to place us in a justified state how much more reasonable is it to believe that being in this justified state he will save us in the great day of final judgment. The fact that we are no longer under divine condemnation but are in the justified state, objects of God's approbation, is due on the one hand to Christ's blood and on the other to our faith, but to faith Paul does not here make any allusion because he is presenting the divine and not the human side of the matter. The subject of his thought is the certainty of the believer's salvation at the last day, and the ground of this certainty is in God and not in the believer himself, Christ still lives, and, as living, will carry forward this salvation to its consummation. Gal. ii. 20, Heb. vii. 25; John xiv. 19.

V. 10. *For if*, etc. An emphatic restatement of verses 6, 8, 9. *Enemies*. Compare the terms "without strength," "ungodly," "sinners," in the verses mentioned. We were neither just nor good (verse 7) we were ungodly, sinners, even enemies. The being "reconciled" in this verse corresponds to being "justified" in verse 9. The sinner in his capacity of one guilty and under condemnation is said to be justified—that is, the condemnation is removed and he be-

comes the object of God's favor or approbation. When he is spoken of as "enemy" the natural term to be used is "reconciliation." The sinner may be truly spoken of in both capacities; for he who violates God's law and thus comes under condemnation is necessarily to be regarded as opposed to God's law; and he who is opposed to God's law is opposed to God himself, for God and his law are one. Christ's blood (verse 9), or his death (verse 10), is the ground or means on God's part whereby both the justification and the reconciliation are to be effected, if effected at all. But if while we were yet guilty and condemned and also at enmity with God, his love should make such advances toward us as to render it possible for us to be justified and reconciled, how much easier is it, humanly speaking, for him to preserve us to the end. The argument is from the greater to the less, from the more difficult to the less difficult.

But while the unjustified and unreconciled sinner is thus called an "enemy" of God, it must not be supposed that the apostle means to teach that the "enmity" is all on one side. That God is "angry" with the wicked every day, is stated in substance everywhere in the Bible. He loves the sinner as a man, as the father loves his wayward son as a son. He does not love him as a drunkard, or as otherwise disobedient. If God loved the sinner as a sinner he would have arranged no way whereby the sinner might be otherwise than a sinner. But in his capacity as a sinner he can only be the object of God's eternal disapprobation, or wrath; and these are the reasons why God himself instituted a plan whereby, continuing to be a man, he might cease to be a sinner—in the sense of one guilty and unreconciled.

V. 11: *And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*

Saved by his life. Now God's love for the man is unqualified by any counter feeling due to the man's former character or status as one ungodly and at enmity, for, "justified by the death of his Son," he is "saved by his life" as freely as if he had never been a sinner. The word "saved" here denotes "preservation," or continuance in God's favor to the end. Christ lives to be his continual helper, and the fact that Christ lives is a pledge of the Christian's final salvation. "Because I live ye shall live also." John xiv. 19.

V. 11. *And not only so*, etc. We not only live, but we live rejoicingly. We not only have *peace*, we *rejoice in hope*, we not only *rejoice in tribulation*, but we also rejoice in God himself, in what he is in himself—a God of such love, mercy, wisdom, holiness, and various infinite perfections. So the believer no longer has any thing to fear from God. **Through our Lord Jesus Christ.** We rejoice through Christ because we owe all to Christ; it is he who enabled and who ever enables us to rejoice.

By whom we have now received the atonement. Through whom, through whose agency or work. Notice the word *now*; not an object of *hope*, (verse 2), but a present possession and cause for present joy. The word *atonement* is, in the Greek, the same as reconciliation, and is so translated in verse 10. The Revised Version renders it "reconciliation" here. It is not rendered "atonement" elsewhere in

the King James Version, nor does the word atonement as a rendering of any other word elsewhere occur. "We have received the reconciliation" means that we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, as stated in verse 10. The "we" is not the human race, but the believer. This whole section (verse 1-11) is addressed to believers. The greater the number of those who become believers, the greater is the number included in the "we." The Apostle simply states the connection between the death of Christ on the one hand, and the reconciliation and justification on the other; as one might say simply that the earth is attracted by the sun, the weight is lifted by a lever, etc. The verses contain no hint whatever as to the *nature* of the connection; and so far as the great practical question of being justified, reconciled, and saved ever onward, even through the great Judgment day, is concerned, it does not matter whether we know the *nature* of the relation between the cause and the effect or not. That is a question of what is called speculative theology, as the nature of universal attraction is a question of speculative physics, which the physicists long since ceased to discuss.

THIRD PROPOSITION—THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE
PROVIDED SALVATION.

(Chap. V., 11-21.)

Having in the preceding section fully set forth his doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and having concluded it in the first part of this chapter with an argument for the preservation of the believer through all the future, even in the great day of wrath, the Apostle proceeds in this section to prove that salvation is provided for all men, including the Gentiles,

V. 12:—*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

and not merely for the Jews. He bases his argument here on the universality of sin. The two terms of comparison are Adam and Christ, and the connection in which the Apostle places these is a logical one, and not a mere juxtaposition. We may differ in opinion as to *how* it became so, whether by mere heredity or otherwise, but Paul here states the *fact*, without explanation, that sin is a *racial* matter. Whatever may be affirmed of Adam may be affirmed of every man. I am not guilty of Adam's sin. But Adam became corrupt and guilty, and I have become corrupt and guilty. If Adam had not become so, I might not have become so. My corruption began in his, and in this sense I sinned in him. So did every man. In this respect the human race is a unit. So is the offered salvation a racial matter. Every man needs salvation, because every man is a member of the race. Salvation is offered to every man because it is offered to the race. The whole includes all the parts, and not merely this or that nation, or this or that individual. The provision is as broad, as deep, as abundant as the disease. The offer is made to the race, and to each member of the race alike. The "atonement," or provided salvation, is unlimited in its sufficiency. Such in brief is the substance of this section. That this provision is limited in its efficiency by man's free will, and by that alone, is true; but on this point the Apostle in this section does not touch.

V. 12. **Wherefore.** Or "therefore," as the Revised Version has it. Literally, "on this account," or "for

this reason." The Apostle introduces a logical inference, deduced from the foregoing exposition of the efficacy of Christ's death and life. We may perhaps best paraphrase his thought thus: "What I have said in the foregoing exposition of the efficacy both of the death and life of Christ is true; *therefore* it follows that as sin and death came into the world through the one man Adam, so do justification and life come through the one man Christ Jesus." It would not have been just on the part of God to permit the human race to come into existence after Adam had sinned, and be a unit in its experience of the sin and death which flow from Adam's, had he not also regarded the race as a unit in Christ, and in the offered righteousness and life which come through him. Hence, as by the one man Adam, etc. (verse 12), so by the one man Jesus Christ, etc. (verses 15-18).

By one man. Through the disobedience of the one man Adam. **Sin entered.** The sin, the evil something called sin—sin in its most general sense, which includes all specific forms. Perhaps the best name for it is spiritual or moral corruption. The first man having thus by his own act become of a corrupt nature, if he is permitted to have a posterity, it also must have the same nature, for every thing, if it reproduce itself at all, must reproduce after its kind and in its own image. Hence, there was but one of two things which God, consistently with his holy perfections, could do. He must either cause Adam to be not only the first man, but also the last one, or he must, in making provision for the restoration of one member of the race, therein make provision for the restoration of every member.

Death by sin. As Adam was the cause or start-

ing point of sin as it exists in the human race, so sin, as it exists in the human race is the cause of human death. The death here meant is physical human death. So it seems to me for the following briefly stated reasons:

1. In its literal and usual import the word death means physical death, though of course the word is sometimes in the Bible used in a figurative sense, as in the expression, "the second death."

2. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," was not written of the soul as distinguished from the body. It is only another way of saying, "Thou shalt die," and to Adam it was a very clear way of saying it, for he was doubtless more familiar with his physical origin than he was with what was now to be his physical destination. Paul evidently had this passage in Genesis in his mind.

3. "Spiritual death" is only another name for "sin," or moral corruption, as the word is used in this verse. If "spiritual death" may be here substituted for "death," we should have a tautology thus: Moral corruption entered into the world, and moral corruption by moral corruption; and so moral corruption passed upon all, for that all became morally corrupt. The only meaning, it seems, that we can attach to "spiritual death" is that of a state of moral corruption, and this is at least only an aspect of sin.

4. Had Adam and the race continued in the sinless state, the members of the ever-multiplying race might have been transfigured and translated from earth, through another way than that which we now call death. The apostle, in this passage, has no necessary reference to the death of brutes; nor is the view which we have taken of his meaning at all opposed

to the doctrine that some brutes were created for the purpose of being killed and eaten by sinless man. The body of sinless man was not intrinsically immortal or changeless, any more than was the body of the sinless Christ, who needed and ate flesh and other food.

For that all have sinned. Inasmuch as all have sinned; or better, inasmuch as all sinned. This does not mean, however, that I am guilty of Adam's sin, or that I committed Adam's sin. The Calvinist, as such, does not necessarily believe this, whatever may be the belief of any individual Calvinist. Nor do the words necessarily mean that any given human being has committed any sin at all. The infant and born idiot have not. The passage simply means that every human being, infants, idiots, and all others, are included within the scope of the consequences of Adam's sin. His own spiritual corruption and mortality were forever entailed on his posterity. If there is any human being, infant, idiot, or rational adult, of whom this is not true, then there is one human being for whom Christ did not die, and for whom Christ does not live, and who has no part nor lot in Christ. In this sense, and in this sense alone, so far as the infant is concerned, may it be said that

"In Adam's fall
We sinned all,"

just as the stream may have received its beginnings of corruptions from its very fountain. But as a rational adult, I may not only sin myself, but I may, as it were, re-commit Adam's sin by identifying myself with it, even as one may identify himself with a criminal, making the criminal's guilt his guilt without

V. 13:—(*For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.*

V. 14:—(*Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*

having committed the criminal's very act. And hence it may be said that in dealing with Adam God was dealing with Adam's race. Only in this sense have the obscure and hence the unfortunate terms "imputation," "representative," "federal head," etc., as applied to Adam, any proper meaning.

Vs. 13, 14. *For until the law*, etc. The meaning of these two verses can perhaps be best presented in a paraphrase, thus: Death is caused by sin, I say, even the death of those who lived before the law was given through Moses, for sin was in the world during all the centuries prior to this, although men did not impute or reckon it against themselves as sin, and although as a matter of fact they did not sin *after the similitude of Adam's sin*—that is, they did not violate the direct and explicit command which Adam did. But they all died, and that proves that they all sinned. And the fact they all sinned was brought about by the fact that Adam sinned. Adam, who, in thus embodying, as it were, the whole race in himself, and thus, as it were, acting for the whole race, is a figure or type of Christ, the second Adam, who embodies the whole race in himself, so that in providing pardon and life for one he provides the same for all. As Adam was the source of sin and death to all mankind, so is Christ the only possible source to all mankind of righteousness and life. The unity or solidarity of all man-

V. 15:—*But not as the offence, so also is the free gift: for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*

kind in the latter is based by Paul on the unity of the race in the former. That is, in short, the universality of what we call the "atonement" of the one—to wit, Christ, is here based on the universality of the sin of the one, to wit, Adam. And yet there is a difference in the parallelism, as stated in the next verses. We may say here, however, that while the human race, including every individual member of it, must inevitably be, in the above sense, involved in Adam, any individual member, if he so choose, may indorse in his wicked heart Adam's sin, and thus, apart even from any inherited sinfulness, make himself a party to it, and thus sever himself from the scope of the universal provision made in Christ.

Who is the figure, etc. That is, Adam was the figure or type of Christ. In what respect? This: As Adam was the primal source of sin and death to the whole human race, so is Christ the primal source of righteousness and immortality to the whole race. As Adam in this sense acted for the whole human race so does Christ include within himself the whole race; what he did for one man he did for all. This is the only extent to which the parallelism holds.

V. 15. *But not as the offence.* Not as Adam's offence so the offered salvation in Christ. *Of one.* The one—to wit, Adam. *Many.* The human race. *By one man.* By the one man—to wit, Jesus Christ. *Unto many.* Unto the many—to wit, the human race. The grace of God here is that disposition of

V. 16:—*And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.*

love which caused God to offer to the human race the gift of salvation through Christ.

It will be seen that the Apostle in this verse goes beyond the parallelism of verses 12-14 between Adam and Christ and proceeds to *contrast* them. But it is difficult to see exactly in what respect the contrast obtains, and a great variety of opinions has been held by commentators in regard to this question. It is not possible for us, however, to enter here upon a discussion of these opinions. The contrast seems evidently to be between the deadly influence which proceeds upon the race from Adam, and the saving influence which proceeds upon the race from God through Christ. If the former was powerful enough to produce universal sin and death, the latter is even more powerful to produce universal righteousness and immortality. It is a great deal more difficult to cure one man or a thousand than it is to make one or a thousand sick. It is a great deal more difficult to restore a fallen man or a fallen race than it is to cause a man or a race to fall. Through Adam was the latter done, through Christ the former. Hence, grace more abounds.

V. 16. *And not as it was.* Another point of contrast is here mentioned. The judgment of condemnation came upon the whole human race primarily because of *one* transgression, that—to wit, of Adam; but the free gift unto justification is offered to and made possible to the whole human race in the face of, not only Adam's one transgression, but of each rational adult's many transgressions.

V. 17:—*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one ; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)*

V. 18:—*Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*

V. 17. *For if*, etc. A third point of contrast between Adam and Christ, and of the superiority of the latter over the former. All men have come to be reigned over by Death as by a monarch because, primarily, of the one man's (Adam's) offence ; but because of the free gift offered to all men through the one man Christ all men may cease ultimately to be reigned over by death and may themselves reign in the glorious resurrection of the body ; and those who receive this "abundance of grace" which is offered in Christ as a free gift to all, not only *may* thus reign but actually will do so.

V. 18. *Therefore as by the offence*, etc. The Apostle in this verse sums up the points of comparison between Adam and Christ, verses 12–17, and at the same time by means of the word "therefore" makes this verse the conclusion of the argument for the universality of the salvation provided in Christ, as begun in verse 12 ; thus : As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, etc., even so by the righteousness of one the free gift, etc. This is the argument. The points of comparison are : (1) The universality of the evil entailed on the race through Adam ; the universality of the offer of salvation through Christ ; (2) the superiority in respect to the power of the salvation, or free gift, over the sin of

Adam; (3) the evil through Adam came primarily of Adam's one sin, the salvation is offered in the face not only of Adam's one, but of each individual's many sins (grace more abounds); (4) through Adam Death was caused to reign over man, through Christ Death is conquered and man is caused to reign (O grave where is thy victory). No. 1 is the only point of resemblance, Nos. 2, 3, 4 are points of contrast.

Free gift. The words "the free gift came" are supplied from the sense of the passage, not being contained in the Greek; they are, however, in verse 16. The free gift of salvation is said to have come upon all men because it is offered alike to all. Christ is God's gift not to this or that man or nation but to the whole race; Adam's gift was sin and death. And while any individual man may for himself accept or reject God's gift, there is a sense in which it does nevertheless accrue to the benefit of the whole race and of every man whether he accepts it or rejects it. If God had not offered the gift the race would either have ended with Adam, or it would have continued hopelessly in sin and misery.

The justification of life, or the removal of God's condemnation or disapprobation from all is said in this verse to be the object of God's free gift to all; and what is here attributed to the "righteousness" of the one—to wit, Christ, is in verses 9, 10, attributed to his blood or death. There is no contradiction. The word "righteousness" of Christ stands in antithesis to, and is naturally suggested by, the offence or unrighteousness of Adam; and as the unrighteousness and divine condemnation which Adam communicated to his race began in his act of disobedience, so did the righteousness and justification which Christ

V. 19:—*For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

V. 20:—*Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*

brings to the race consist in or proceed from his obedience, the essential culminating point of which was his death. This is the idea or meaning of the Apostle in verse 19.

V. 19. *By one man's disobedience.* See the last note above.

Many. Literally, "the many"—that is, the race. We know it means "the race" because it stands in antithesis to "the one," Adam. *Were made sinners.* Were set down as sinners in God's book, so to speak. *By the obedience of one.* Of the one—to wit, Christ. See the last note on verse 18. *Shall many.* Literally, "the many," the whole human race, standing in antithesis to "the one," Christ. *Made righteous.* Set down as righteous in God's book. Paul means to affirm here that the provision offered through Christ is co-extensive with the evil wrought through Adam. As by Adam's disobedience all men are brought into a state of condemnation, so by Christ's obedience all men shall have through all time the means of securing the everlasting removal of that condemnation.

V. 20. *Moreover the law entered,* etc. "As the sin of Adam and the grace of Christ have been presented as the main elements and moving powers in man's history, the question naturally occurs—what

V. 21:—*That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

was the purpose of the law?" (Gifford.) This, in the estimation of the Jew especially, whose religious system placed such a large emphasis on the law, was by no means an unimportant question. Paul answers it here very briefly, reserving it for fuller discussion further on. His meaning in this verse is: The law came in along side of the economy of sin in order to awaken in man the consciousness of sin and thereby sharpen his longing for redemption. This is the function of the law whether in its relation to the Jewish people, the race as a whole, or to any individual; for while the Jewish reader would naturally and correctly understand Paul as referring here to the Mosaic law, the spirit of his teaching applies to God's revealed law as such, whether in the Mosaic form, or in some other form. To the Christian believer the Sermon on the Mount is as truly "the law" as the Mosaic statutes.

V. 21. *That as sin hath reigned*, etc. In order that, etc. The law entered, as already explained, not in order that sins might thereby be multiplied, but in order that man might have a more vivid consciousness of his sinfulness, in order that thus the reign of sin might be displaced by the reign of grace. One, in other words, must know himself as the slave of a hard master before he will long for a better one. He must know himself as sick before he will take medicine.

IV.

THE DOCTRINE IN ITS RELATION TO SANCTIFICATION.

(Objections considered.)

First Objection.

The first objection which Paul represents as being brought against his doctrine of justification by grace through faith is, that it is promotive of bad morals, wrong conduct, or unholiness of life. This he proceeds to answer.

Chap. VI., v. 1:—*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

V. 1. *What shall we say?* Paul represents himself as putting into words an objection which the Jews might have to his doctrine of justification by faith. What shall we say, in view of your doctrine of justification, and of the certainty of final salvation which it guarantees? What shall we say, especially in view of your last words, that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound?” If God can thus glorify himself through our sins, and, at the same time, make certain our final salvation, should we not rather continue in sin that his grace may abound?

V. 2:—*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

V. 2-14.—(The answer.)—*God forbid.* Literally, “Let it not be”—a strong way of saying, “By no

V. 3:—*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

means.” To suppose that my doctrine warrants any such conclusion is absurd. Is it possible for one who has died to live in those things in respect to which he died? *Are dead to sin.* Died to sin. Shall we, who died to sin at the time we were reconciled to God and justified, live any longer in sin? In this case the words reconciliation and justification would have no meaning, for to say “reconciled” and “justified” is only another way of saying “to die to sin.” To continue in sin is to contradict the fact of having died to sin. This is the first stone in the foundation of Paul’s doctrine of holy living. The justified one can no more give his mental assent to any inward or outward act of sin.

V. 3. *Know ye not.*—The argument in this and the next two verses is simple, and may be briefly stated thus: Or, if you do not understand what I have just said—to wit, that there has been in the case of you who are justified a death to sin—know ye not then what was signified by the baptism which ye received? If you understand that rite, you would know that it implies a death and also a second birth, a death to sin on the one hand, a birth on the other hand to holiness, or newness of life, which removes every possibility of a return to the old life of willful and loved sin.

So many of us as were. This expression, as here translated, and also as rendered in the Revised Version, would seem to imply that there might be some Christians who had not been baptized. Paul

V. 4:—*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

never seems to have laid much stress on baptism as an essential rite. (1 Cor. i. 14.) And in the verse before us baptism is not itself the death to sin, but is mentioned by the Apostle as only its outward proof or symbol, just as being buried physically is the usual outward proof that one is dead physically.

Baptized into Jesus Christ. To be "baptized" into Jesus Christ is to be brought into fellowship and communion, or oneness of spirit with him; and it is here by figure of speech called a "baptism," because by this outward rite it was symbolized. Had Paul been speaking in the language of the Old Testament he would have used the word "circumcised" instead of "baptized," and in the same spiritual import.

Were baptized into his death. That is, as Christ's death was the termination of and the complete deliverance from the life with its various conditions which our sins imposed upon him, so is our death to sin, as explained above, the termination and complete deliverance from our life of voluntary sin.

It may be observed that the name "Jesus Christ," in this verse, is, in the best ancient manuscripts and in the Revised Version, "Christ Jesus." Christ is the official or mediatorial name; Jesus is his name as a person. In the one form of writing the two the official character is emphasized; in the other, the person.

V. 4. **Therefore we are.** Rather, "we have been," or "we were." The tense is past; and whereas we *were* buried, we *are now* risen. **Buried**

with him. Had cremation been the usual popular mode of disposing of dead bodies in Paul's day, he might, without interfering in the least with the force of his argument, have said "cremated" instead of "buried," the material in the one case being fire and in the other water. The *argument* does not depend for its validity upon any one mode of baptism. All that he means to say is that as Christ died, etc., so have we died, etc., and as Christ's burial was a proof of his death, so is our baptism a symbolical proof of our death; and furthermore, as Christ's death to all the conditions of his former life, imposed upon him by our sins, was followed by his resurrection to a life of perfect freedom from all those conditions, so is our death to sin followed by a new life of holiness or right living on our part.

By the glory of the Father. The resurrection of the Son of God was not the work of one single attribute of the Father, as, for instance of his power; it was a glorification also of his mercy to mankind, his righteousness, holiness, etc. In short, had the Son not been raised the Father would so far have failed to exhibit not only his power but also those other attributes. In this sense the resurrection was no less a moral necessity than the death.

Should walk. Having reference to our *continuous* moral conduct. **In newness of life.** Something more is meant than a mere difference of our conduct now as compared with what it was before we died to sin. We do not merely live differently. The very principle of life itself in us is something altogether and absolutely different from what it once was. Our daily stream of thoughts, words, deeds, feelings, flows from another fountain. These, making up that which

V. 5:—*For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

we call life as lived day by day, are only the out-flow of that invisible *life*, which, so to speak, is hid with Christ in God. This is the “newness of life,” as contrasted with the life from which our thoughts, deeds, etc., used to flow.

V. 5. *For if we have been planted*, etc. For if we have become united with him. *In the likeness of his death*. As there was a dying on the part of Christ, so must there have been a dying on the part of the Christian—the one for sin, the other to sin. They go down, as it were, into the grave together, the believing sinner thus identifying himself with Christ. Thus are we planted or united with him in the likeness of his death. *In the likeness of his resurrection*. This does not refer, of course, to the resurrection at the last day. But as he rose from the grave, so shall we, by identifying ourselves with him in his death, arise with him to the newness of life, which we derive from him. But we should notice that we can not become united with Christ in his life, we can not become partakers of his life, unless we have previously become identified with him in his death. The Christ who died is the necessary prelude of the Christ who is risen. This is true of every human being, though in the case of the infant, the irrational adult, and perhaps of some heathen, there is of course *no conscious* union with Christ in his death.

V. 6. *Knowing this*. That is, we not only know it as a fact, but we know it as one which we can not

V. 6:—*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

V. 7:—*For he that is dead is freed from sin.*

doubt, because of the evidence of our own experience. Of the two Greek words meaning "knowing," the one here used is *gnoskontes*; the other one (*eidotes*) occurs in verse 9.

Our old man. Ourselves as we were before we died to sin. (Col. iii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. iv. 22-24.) ***Was crucified with him.*** With Christ. Crucifixion was the manner of Christ's death, and hence, when our old or unrenewed selves died to sin they are said to have been crucified. Being "crucified with him" is not essentially a different idea from being "planted in the likeness of his death," but the same under a different figure. And it touches the same doctrine—to wit, that if we would share the new life of the risen Christ we must first be crucified with him; we must, as it were, see ourselves crucified in him. Or, if we refuse and leave Christ to share his cross alone, he must also share alone his risen life.

The body of sin. The "old man" is, so to speak, sin's body; through this body, or old man, or unrenewed nature, sin tyrannizes over us, exacting from us hard service. The old man being crucified, sin's body is destroyed and he can no longer exact service of us. The "new man" which we become on rising with Christ is not sin's body, although sin may make fierce assaults upon it; it is Christ's or the Holy Spirit's body.

V. 7. ***He that is dead is freed from sin.*** The one dying with Christ is by the very act of dying freed

V. 8:—*Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

V. 9:—*Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

V. 10:—*For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

from sin, his master; for when he rises again with Christ he is a "new man," a "new creature," into whom sin no longer has access. He died a slave, he arose a freeman; he died as sin's body, he arose as a grafted member of Christ's body, from which henceforth he draws his vitality.

V. 8. *If we be dead.* Rather, if we died. *We shall also live.* Not at the final resurrection, but during this present life. If we participate in Christ's death, we shall also rise with him and share with him his resurrection life.

V. 9. *Knowing that*, etc. (*eidotes*). Our faith that we shall share Christ's life rests on our knowledge of the fact that he rose from the dead and is alive for evermore. Other men, as Lazarus, were raised from the dead, and after that were mortal as they were before; they died again. Not so with Christ; death has dominion no more over him.

V. 10. *Died unto sin once.* Christ not only died *for* sin, but, as Paul here states, the death which he died was also a death *to* sin, to all the sufferings and other conditions which sin (our sins) imposed upon him. And this death will be no more repeated by him. The relation in which he stood to sin up to the very moment of his death at that moment was severed

V. 11:—*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

V. 12:—*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

V. 13:—*Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

forever. The life consequent upon his resurrection was to be a forever unbroken life unto God.

He liveth unto God. The expressions “unto sin” and “unto God” help to explain each other. As “unto sin” means in relation to or in respect to sin, so “unto God” means in relation to or in respect to God. In dying he fulfilled, once for all, his personal and official relation to sin. In living, he lives in relation only to God, his personal life being wholly unfettered by our sins, and his official life being devoted to the work of bringing those for whom he died into the same life, and preserving them in the same life with himself.

V. 11. ***Likewise***, etc. In this verse the thought of verse 10, in its application to believers, is brought out. In the same manner as Christ died unto sin once, and forever thereafter liveth unto God, so the believer must regard himself as having died once for all unto sin, and as living forever thereafter as a participant of Christ’s life unto God. If he so reckons or regards himself, he can not for a moment suppose that he should sin “in order that grace may abound.”

Vs. 12, 13. ***Let not sin therefore***, etc. In view of the facts stated in the preceding verses. Sin is said

V. 14:—*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

to reign in us when we voluntarily live in sin—in the indulgence or practice of evil thoughts, feelings, habits, etc. It is said to reign in our “mortal body” when we yield our bodies to be sin’s servant and instrument. The body of the believer is here called mortal in view of the fact that a remnant of sin is still left in it, against which the spirit must strive; and also because the body which he shall have will not be mortal, but immortal, itself having become a participant in the redemption wrought by Christ. (See viii. 11–23.) ***The lusts thereof.*** Any evil desires, appetites, or passions, which attack us through the medium of our bodies, or which we could not experience if we had no bodies. ***As those that are alive from the dead.*** As those that died once for all to sin and rose again to newness of life.

V. 14. ***For sin shall not have,*** etc. This is a sure and encouraging promise, justifying the exhortation in verse 12. The reason assigned for the certainty that sin will no longer have dominion over the believer is that he is not now under law but under grace. By not being *under law* is meant that he does not now live in respect to the law, with the view to working out his salvation thereby. He is now under grace, and this grace communicates to him a power whereby he is enabled to resist the efforts of sin to domineer over him, whereby, indeed, he is enabled to conquer sin. Law, under which he was before he came under grace, communicated to him no such power, and hence the tyrant sin had over him a scarcely contested reign. Law takes but little interest in the welfare of a strug-

gling soul; divine grace takes much. The language of Paul in this verse is easily seen, therefore, not to mean that the believer is no longer under obligation to obey the law in the sense of right living, the object of this whole section of the Epistle being to show not only that he *should*, but that by the grace of God he *will* live aright.

Second Objection.

After all, however, the statement that we are not under law was liable to be misapprehended by some of those to whom Paul was writing. We may assume that he again represents himself as speaking in the person of one whose objection to his doctrine of justification by grace is based on his misapprehension of its practical outcome in his life, thus: I do not yet see that your doctrine of justification makes any provision for right living. It rather seems to me to take away all safeguards against wrong living, for you have just said that we are not under law, but under grace, and hence we may act with impunity without any restrictions whatsoever on our conduct. What Paul therefore assigned as the reason why we would not sin, the objector strangely construes into reason why we may. In answering the objection, and in further illustrating the outworking of the principle of the new life which is in us, Paul shows that the very fact that we have been justified implies a transference of our allegiance as servants from sin to righteousness, and that although we are no longer under law in the old sense, this very transference is itself of the nature of a legal preventive of any further service of sin. And to make still more impressive the sense of obligation on the part of the justified one to serve his new mas-

V. 15:—*What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

ter, and of the personal interest involved in this service, the Apostle reminds the objector that the wages received in the one case is death, whereas in the other it is life eternal.

V. 15. *What then? Shall we sin?* etc. That is, does not this statement of yours that we are not under law remove all legal restraints from our conduct, and will this inner principle of holiness or newness of life be, in the absence of law, a sufficient protection against wrong living and a sufficient inducement and help to right living? It seems to me, says the objector, that it will not, but that on the other hand the very fact that it is not law but grace to which we are now amenable will, of itself, be a sort of inducement to venture, as it were, upon the leniency of God, and make it the ground or occasion of many an act of sin. The grace is so easy that it will engender abuse of itself and carelessness.

God forbid. By no means, says Paul in indignant rejection of such a suggestion. And then he proceeds in the following verses, not to repeat what he said in the preceding verses on the inner principle of right living, but to introduce a new argument, to wit: We are bound by a law of service to another master, and we can not stand in this relation to but one at a time. We can not serve two masters; for one who serves is a servant, and a servant (*doulos*, bond-servant) of a person is one who belongs wholly to that person. Hence, in the case of the justified one, in addition to the moral impossibility of serving sin, there is another principle which prevents it.

V. 16:—*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

V. 17: *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

V. 16. **Know ye not**, etc. An appeal to a law or principle which Paul regarded so plain as to cause him to think it generally known, and of which those to whom he wrote should need only to be reminded. This principle is: We are the bond-servants of him to whom we present ourselves as such by acts of obedience to him, and we come thus as it were to owe him obedience; we are bound to him as one becomes bound to a habit often indulged. This one to whom we thus become bound is either sin or obedience, by which latter is meant "the obedience of faith"—that is, the gospel (see ch. i. 5; xvi. 26; 2 Cor. x. 5). If it be Sin, the wages or outcome is death eternal; if it be obedience or the gospel, the outcome is righteousness and life eternal. In other words, in the one case there is a constant increase of moral corruption which culminates in eternal death, in the other a constant growth in righteousness or grace which culminates in eternal life. See verse 23.

V. 17. **But God be thanked**. The apostle thanks God that whereas those to whom he wrote had once been the bond-servants of sin, they had become the bond-servants of the gospel; the old allegiance had been broken by a power stronger than sin, and the new allegiance to the new Master had taken its place and had been persevered in. There was no occasion for Paul to say to the Roman Christians that

V. 18: *Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*

V. 19: *I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*

some of them had so far abused his doctrine of justification as to actually commit sins because they were no longer under law but under grace. Their obedience had been cordial. *That form of doctrine.* That mold of doctrine. They had shaped or molded their characters and lives according to the mold into which they had been originally cast by their first apostolic teacher, whoever he may have been. It is probable that Paul himself had been the instructor of many of them at Ephesus, or Corinth, or other places, from which they had since moved to Rome.

V. 18. *Being then made free.* Or, and being made free. The illustration is the same expressed in other words, as in the preceding verse. The idea is, not that they were made sinless, but that they as slaves of sin were emancipated or freed from their former master; and being in this state of freedom, it was absurd to suppose that they could return to their former state of slavery. No Roman slave who had been liberated would ever think of such a thing. The word which Paul here uses to designate the liberation of believers from sin, their master, was the one that was technically employed by the Romans to denote the emancipation of a slave.

V. 19. *I speak after the manner of men.* I draw an illustration from the common affairs of life,

in order that you may clearly understand me. The inability to clearly see into this subject was, however, a moral rather than an intellectual one; for moral truths are addressed to our moral natures no less than to our intellectual. In other words, one way to know God is to love God; "if any man will know of the doctrine," let him obey it. Paul had called the habitual doing of acts of uncleanness and iniquity the service of sin, the outcome of which was an aggravation of the hard slavery; he calls the opposite life the service of righteousness, the outcome of which was increase in personal holiness. He calls this a service or slavery by way of accommodating himself to many of his readers who may not have been able to view it from the stand-point of a matured personal experience. He does not mean that it was an irksome and hard bond-service to those who heartily engaged in it. It was rather a service which love converted into a glorious liberty.

Iniquity unto iniquity. Leading to yet greater iniquity. The word rendered "iniquity" means lawlessness, living in a manner regardless of God's law; the more one so lives, the more disposed is he to so live. The *uncleanness* referred to is a corrupt and degraded nature and life.

Yield your members. The word "yield" is in ch. xii. 1 translated "present," and this is the better word. The word "yield" implies a degree of reluctance, whereas the believer is not called on to render a reluctant service.

Vs. 20-23. The apostle here points out the fruits or consequences of the service of sin and righteousness respectively. He had stated in verse 19 that the

V. 20:—*For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.*

V. 21:—*What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.*

V. 22:—*But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

V. 23:—*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

service of uncleanness and iniquity was unto, or led to, yet greater iniquity, and now he adds by way of confirming his words that they were while engaged in that service *free from righteousness*; they were not troubled or hampered by any sense or feeling of want of righteousness on their part. There was a time when they did not stop to recognize that righteousness had any claim on them whatever; they sinned with a high hand; they drank iniquity as water.

V. 21. *What fruit had ye*, etc. He now appeals to the memory of their experience. *Had ye*. Not merely, what did you *produce* as the result of your service, but what did you *possess* as your part? The slaves of a hard master may produce much good fruit for the master and none for themselves. But the Apostle leaves the question unanswered. The silent memory of a blasted life, a field of death; a life of which they could only be bitterly ashamed was the sufficient sad answer. The tendency or end of such a life is death, or eternal separation from God.

V. 22. *But now being made free*, etc. To be free from righteousness is to be the slave of sin; to be liberated from this slavery is to become the serv-

ants of God or righteousness, the tendency or end of which is higher attainments in holiness and eternal life.

V. 23. *The wages.* The Apostle here presents the same idea under another figure. Instead of "fruit" and "end," he employs a word which was used to denote the food and pay which a soldier received from the general under whose banner he served. The commander, Sin, pays in a food and coin the name of which is *death*—eternal death. He is represented as receiving this not from God, but from sin. Viewed in other aspects it might be regarded as the outworking of a law which God himself has established. The servant of sin must look to sin for his pay.

The gift of God. He does not say the wages. While the believer has all along in these verses been called the servant of God or of righteousness, in contrast to the servant of sin, yet he is not such a servant as receives wages from God; he receives free gifts. The man who gets eternal death, or hell, always merits or earns it; he who gets eternal life, or heaven, does not earn it. *Through Jesus Christ our Lord.* In Christ Jesus our Lord. He who has and lives the newness of life of which Paul has been speaking, has it and lives it only as he is *in* Christ Jesus. Apart from Christ he has and can have no life in him.

THE TRUE FUNCTION OF THE LAW.

(Chap. VII.)

This chapter is regarded as one of the most difficult of interpretation in the whole Bible. The precise

application of it has been the subject of dispute since the earliest ages of the Christian Church, and a great variety of opinions has been held, by pious and learned men, both in regard to the chapter as a whole and also as to its details. It therefore becomes us here also to express our views without dogmatism. It is probable that every reader may easily find more than one statement in the chapter to the truth of which he can readily testify in the light of his own spiritual experience.

We should bear in mind, however, if we would study the chapter aright, that it is not to be regarded as an isolated scrap which the Apostle has thrown into his letter, but that it is an essential part of an epistolary doctrinal treatise. And in order that we may more clearly see *what part* of the treatise this chapter is, let us briefly review the steps by which the Apostle has arrived at the present point in his discussion :

1. The statement of his fundamental theme, to wit : The gospel the power of God unto salvation to all men—in which the term “salvation” denotes not only justification but also sanctification, or the newness of life which becomes the permanent possession and characteristic of the believer.

2. The universal need on the part of mankind of this salvation.

3. Justification is to be secured, not by “works of the law,” but only by grace through faith.

4. The permanent validity of this justification, and hence the certainty of the believer’s final salvation.

5. This justification and all that it implies is possible to all men ; the provided remedy is co-extensive with the evil.

6. Paul next shows that this justification by grace through faith, rather than by legalistic works, instead of laying down a gap for unholy living, is on the contrary a guaranty of permanent right or holy living—sactification (not sinlessness). This part of the discussion began with chapter vi. and continues through chapter vii. and viii. In chapter vi. 14, the Apostle, in the course of his argument, stated that believers, or justified persons, are “not under law,” and then he pauses in order to meet and sweep away the anticipated objection that such persons might presume upon this freedom and this grace, so far as to actually commit sin. This ends the chapter, which of course Paul did not divide here. With chapter vii. he resumes the thread of his thought as interrupted at vi. 14.

The chapter seems to be naturally divided into three parts, as follows :

1. Verses 1-6.—The Apostle continues the line of thought interrupted at vi. 14. These verses then may be regarded as a fragment of the section vi. 1-13, devoted to the “first objection.” (See page 182.)

2. Verses 7-13.—In which the Apostle sets forth the true and proper relation of the law chiefly in relation to the unregenerate man, of whom he speaks of himself as the representative. Here the function of the law is to produce “conviction.”

3. Verses 14-25.—In which the Apostle sets forth the relation of the law chiefly to the regenerate man, of whom he again speaks of himself as the representative.

Verses 7-25, as a whole, are his answer to the question: If we, as you say, have misapprehended the true function of law in relation to our salvation, what

Chap. VII., V. 1:—*Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?*

then is its true function? Is it sinful in its tendency? This question constitutes what we may call the "third objection" to Paul's doctrine of salvation, and we see that it bears directly on the specific doctrine of sanctification (not sinlessness). We must notice, however, that Paul does not reason merely negatively, but that in meeting objections he presents his own positive and inspired views.

V. 1. *Know ye not, brethren.* The Revised Version, following the Greek more exactly, begins this sentence with "or," the force of which may be indicated thus: Or, if you do not perceive and admit the truth of my teaching, from what I have said, that freedom from the bond-service of sin implies freedom from legal bondage, let us consider it then from another point of view. *Do you not know*, etc. Paul employs a well-known legal principle to illustrate the emancipation of the believer from the bondage of the law. *Hath dominion over a man.* The term man here denotes simply a human being, whether man or woman. The law permitted a husband to remarry in case of the death of his wife, or the wife in case of the death of the husband. Paul selects the latter as his illustration, because death alone could free the woman from the law of her husband, whereas the husband might free himself from his wife merely by divorcement. We may discover another reason in the application which the Apostle makes of this in verse 4 and following.

V. 2:—*For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.*

V. 3:—*So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

V. 4:—*Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

Vs. 2, 3. **For the woman**, etc. That is, in consequence of the legal principle quoted in verse 1, when the husband died, the woman in her capacity as wife also died; the marital bond is severed.

V. 4. **Wherefore, my brethren**. Paul tells his readers, whom he affectionately calls his brethren, that the same principle operates in the sphere of the spiritual, in consequence of which the believer is made dead to the law, which here corresponds to the dead husband. The relation between the believing soul and the law is severed.

By the body of Christ. The crucified body of Christ is that by which Paul here represents the soul as being itself put to death—that is, put to death in respect to the former husband, the law. In chapter vi. 6, this crucified body of Christ was that by which the soul was made dead to sin, the master. He draws all believers unto him into communion with him in his death. As he was put to death, so they in him and through him are put to death to sin and to the law. But in what respect has the soul, identifying itself by faith with Christ, been in him put to death to the law? In the sense that it can no longer be

V. 5:—*For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*

required to obey it as law. What the believing soul does it does freely and not as one under law. It has in itself a sense of release from law as such. That which it formerly viewed as law it ceases to view as law; it acts henceforth with spontaneity, doing what it pleases, because it can not please to do otherwise than right. Christ died to the law also, in that he was no longer subject to it after his death in the sense in which he was subject to it before his death. Before his death he was subject to it as a man, any man whatsoever, having voluntarily, by his incarnation, become so. After his death he was no longer subject to it, only in so far as one may be said to be subject to his own will or nature.

That ye should be married to another. The object of severing the union with the former husband, the law, was that there might be a union with another husband, to wit, the risen Christ. In harmony with this figure, which expresses a deep and essential spiritual fact, the union with Christ is often called a marriage, Christ being the Bridegroom. ***Fruit unto God.*** See John xv. 1-6; Gal. v. 22, 23. Compare with the fruits in verse 5, and Gal. v. 19-21.

V. 5. *In the flesh.* This does not mean "in the body." The expression is used in two senses: 1. To denote man before he has died to sin and risen with and in Christ to newness of life—unregenerate man. 2. Regenerate man, considered as yet having in him some elements of sin, or of the unregenerate nature,

V. 6:—*But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*

as in the expression, the spirit is willing, but "the flesh" is weak. It is here used in the first of these senses.

The motions of sin. The sinful affections and passions of our unregenerate nature, which, however dormant they may apparently lie, are so easily excited, and when thus moved in our members as their instruments, produce yet greater corruption and other sins, which may be called "fruit unto death." ***By the law.*** The apparently dormant sinful affections and passions are excited by the law. The law irritates them, moves them to action. It is "human nature" to wish most to do that which it is forbidden to do. Such is sin.

V. 6. ***Delivered from the law.*** And hence relieved of its irritation. (See notes on verses 2-4.) ***That being dead,*** etc. That relation wherein we were held to sin and law being dissolved, and hence we ourselves being dead to sin and law. This death, as we have seen, is followed by a resurrection to newness of life, and hence we now serve God in "newness of spirit," etc.; that is, our obedience or service of God is no longer a mere mechanical and heartless service, rendered merely "for conscience sake," but it is engaged in heartily and enjoyed.

Paul, having now explained at sufficient length what he meant by freedom from law (vi. 14), proceeds to set forth the true spiritual function of law in the two sections as indicated above. In doing this he answers what we may regard as the

V. 7:—*What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

Third Objection

to his doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, as against the doctrine of legalistic salvation. In doing so he sets forth the true function of the law in its two-fold relation.

I. *In relation to the unregenerate, producing conviction.*

V. 7. *What shall we say then?* Notice the repeated occurrence of this phrase in chapter iv. 1; vi. 1, 15, and in this verse. In the three last instances it introduces an objection to his doctrine of sanctification, which Paul may be supposed to put into the mouth of an opponent. Here the objection is, Is law then something in itself sinful, that you should so closely identify it with sin as to make freedom from sin involve also freedom from the law?

(The Answer.) *God forbid.* "Let it not be so." And then the Apostle proceeds to illustrate from his own experience that instead of the law being sinful, its true function in respect to sin is not to create sin, but to expose sin in its true nature, to bring to our conscious knowledge its exceeding sinfulness. *Had not known sin.* Paul does not mean that had it not been for the law, no such thing as sin could have existed, and hence of course could not have been known; but he means that he could not have fully known it as existing in himself. (See iii. 20.)

I had not known lust, etc. The word "known" here is not the same in meaning as in the former

V. 8:—*But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.*

V. 9:—*For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*

clause. Paul means that he could not have had the rational apprehension of sin, as existing in himself, had it not been for the experiential knowledge which he acquired of his heart by means of the light which the incoming of the law shed upon it. We do not know how corrupt and prone to evil we are until we are placed under prohibition.

V. 8. *But sin taking occasion*, etc. The law did not create the sin or sinfulness that is in my heart, but no sooner did the law say to me, "Thou shalt not do so and so," than sin started into quick activity and said, "Thou shalt." Immediately I knew how sinful I was, for the sin which said "Thou shalt" was my own sinful nature. Prior to this, sin seemed to be dead or dormant in me; but it was only lying stealthily in ambush, as a wild beast ready to leap upon its prey so soon as the prey seems about to escape it.

V. 9. *For I was alive*, etc. That is, I thought I was alive, for the reason that, as I said, I did not know sin was in me, even as a part of my very self.

The commandment came. A specific law bearing upon a specific sin, as lust, theft, covetousness, etc. *Sin revived.* It only seemed to be dead, and the very moment the law addressed me and reminded me of my danger, and bade me escape for my life, sin made the fatal leap and slew me. In verse 11 Paul says he was slain; in this, however, he says simply

V. 10:—*And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.*

that he died. But the death of sin's victims is always a violent one. Translating the figurative into plain language, Paul means here by "dying" that he came to the recognition of himself as a sinful man, and that this recognition crushed all the sense of complacency and self-righteousness out of him, as it does in the case of all who see themselves vividly in the light of the law. "Man's death is sin's life," says Calvin, "and sin's death is man's life." Or, in other words, if I am alive as a self-righteous man, I must be dead as a conscious sinner, and if I am alive as a conscious sinner, I must be dead as a self-righteous man. If I am alive in the one respect I am dead in the other.

V. 10. *The commandment which was ordained unto life.* The divine intention of the law was to guide to holiness, peace, life. (See Lev. xviii. 5; Deut. v. 29, 33; Ps. xix. 7-11; Ps. cxix. *I found to be unto death.* Paul seems to intimate that such an issue of the law in his own case was to him at the time a matter of sad surprise. The reason why he found it to be death to him was twofold: 1. He separated the law from God's grace, and sought by the former alone to attain a self-righteousness of which he might boast, and which he thought would make him acceptable to God; his heart, or inmost nature, was not right. 2. Occupying this attitude toward the law, it served only as a constant harassment and provocation to sin, and thus revealed to him his inmost and exceeding sinfulness, and this recognition of himself as he really was in God's sight was "conviction." So

V. 11:—*For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.*

V. 12:—*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

the law must, to a greater or less extent, serve every unregenerate man. No man can ascend to the saving recognition of God who does not first descend to the penitential recognition of himself as a sinner.

V. 11. *For sin*, etc. The same meaning as verse 8, expressed in slightly different form. *Deceived me*. It was sin, his own sinful heart, that deceived him. It was not the law's fault. He was not what he thought he was, and so sin, by means of the law, and in the manner already described, slew him. He was no longer, even in his own estimation, a spiritually live man. See notes on verses 8-10.

V. 12. *Wherefore*. So that. It follows from all this that instead of the law being sinful (verse 7), it is holy; it is nothing but the expression to us of the holy will or nature of God himself, forbidding all impure and unholy feelings and desires. The word "law" is a general term, including each of the several commandments. Each commandment is "just," because it makes no unfair demands on any one in any respect, and if any man could and would render to it a *perfect* obedience, it would certainly constitute him really righteous. It is "good," because it is neither useless nor pernicious; it is what may be called "a good thing;" it was intended to be a guide to life, and it actually is the means whereby the unregenerate man is brought to a true knowledge of himself, or is convicted of sin.

V. 13:—*Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.*

V. 13. *Was then that which is good made death unto me?* Was then the command, which I have pronounced to be good, the cause of my slaying, or the cause of the death I have just described myself as dying? By no means, says Paul, but sin was the cause of it. But the law was made sin's instrument of death, in order that thereby the true nature of sin as it exists in me might be made known to me; or in other words, in order that thereby I might see myself as I really am, exceedingly sinful. To "become exceedingly sinful," in this verse, is not to be made sinful, but to be revealed, or become known, to one's self as already being so.

II. *The function of the law in relation to the regenerated man.*

In this instance is produced a sense of a conflict which proves that a remnant of the sinful principle still dwells in him (which conflict, however, is to be regarded as wholesome, this being the only way to reach ultimate victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.) We should notice that Paul here speaks of himself as a sort of twofold or dual being. Himself considered as carnal, or as having an element of the sinful principle still in him, is one self, or "I." Himself considered as regenerate, or apart from this sinful element, is his other self, or "I," and this he regards as his real or veritable self.

V. 14. *The law is spiritual.* That is, holy, just,

V. 14:—*For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

V. 15:—*For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.*

and good. The word "spiritual" in some places in the Bible, as 1 Cor. xv. 44, means not made of matter, not "material:" but here it means holy, pure, destitute of carnality. ***I am carnal.*** By carnal is meant not "fleshly" in the literal sense, but the opposite of spiritual—that is, not holy, not sinless. When Paul says, "I am carnal," he simply means that there is yet in him, though regenerated, a remnant, only too vigorous, of the "old man," the old sinful self or nature. This he here calls "I." This "I" is sin's bond-servant—"sold under sin."

V. 15. ***That which I do.*** The word "do" occurs three times in this verse, for which, however, Paul used three different words. Though they may often be used interchangeably, they are not to be regarded as quite synonymous in this verse. The first "do" (*katergazomai*) means to *work out*—that is, to perform an act, or several acts, regarded merely as a step toward a result; the doer may or may not know in advance what this result is to be. Here he does not know. The second "do" (*prassein*) means to *work at*—that is, it is an act, or series of acts, considered not simply as such, but as rational steps to a recognized end. Here the end which Paul wished to aim at he did not aim at. The third "do" (*poiein*) means to do in the sense, not of working blindly toward an end, not of working intelligently *at* a thing, but in the sense of finishing or accomplishing it; as when we say the work is done, the day is done, etc.

Paul in this verse presents himself in a twofold aspect, (1) as a regenerate man, (2) as a regenerate man who is worried and blinded by the remnant of the sinful principle which is still in him. What he, in the first aspect, wishes and aims to accomplish he does not wish or aim at in the other aspect. His acts then he represents as being performed blindly and in the midst of entanglement; he knows not; he works as one who merely does the bidding of another; and at last when he sees the result, his regenerate self loathes it, hates with a moral reprobation. So it is, to a greater or less extent, in the experience of every Christian. He seems sometimes to have two selves—an "I," and another "I." Chrysostom says in his Homily on this chapter, "I am blinded, feel carried away, I find a violence done to me, I get tripped up without knowing how."

Such, it seems to me, is the plain meaning of this verse, in which the word rendered "to allow" is given its usual meaning of "to know," as in the margin of our Authorized Version. Such also substantially is the interpretation of Calvin, Meyer, Godet, Gifford, and a good many other commentators; though it is perhaps proper to say that others, as Grotius, MacKnight, and Hodge, think that the word may as well be rendered here "to allow" in the sense of "to approve." But if Paul had meant this he might easily have said it. Whether, however, he *meant* it or not in this first clause of the verse, it is obviously true, as a matter of fact, that as a regenerate man he did hate or morally reprobate what he actually accomplished in his capacity of one who still had some sin in him; and this fact he expressly states in the last clause of the verse. Paul could not work out what he wished

V. 16:—*If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.*

V. 17:—*Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

to because he could not work at what he wished to, and the reason why he could not do this to the extent to which he wished was because he was so blinded and embarrassed by his sinful instincts and impulses. He does not excuse himself, however, but accuses the tyranny of the sin yet in him, and sadly deplores his misery. He so loathes the actual result as compared with what he wished to do.

V. 16. *If then I do*, etc. This is good and plain logic. Thus:

The law hates, or morally reprobates, the doing of such and such things.

I also, as a regenerate man, hate, or morally reprobate, the same.

Therefore, I and the law agree,

Or, "I consent that the law is good." The word "good" is also applied to the law in verse 12; but there it was *agathos*, good in the sense of morally useful; here it is *kalos*, good in the sense of morally beautiful or excellent, as when we speak of a "beautiful character, considered merely as a character. The law is good in both senses. Hence the law is not sinful (verse 7).

V. 17. *Now then*. That is, The conclusion is, if I "consent" to the laws, that it is the good, it is not I that do these things which the holy law hates and forbids; it is not the true, real, regenerate "I;" it is that other "I," the "old man," the remnant of the sinful prin-

V. 18:—*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

V. 19:—*For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

principle that still dwells in me, and that struggles so hard for life.

V. 18. *I know that in me.* Here he means again that other "me," the "flesh," himself considered as yet having in him the sinful principle; and this other "me" is all bad. And then he proceeds to say that it is easy enough for his regenerate self to wish to do right, but that his other self interposes obstacles and difficulties which embarrass him not a little.

Paul, as has been stated above, is in these verses (14-25) describing himself as a converted man, engaged in conflict with what I have figuratively called his other self. And in this he is the type of all Christians. But is it necessary for every man to be a "Christian" before he can realize in himself this duality of selves? Before he can experience to a greater or less degree this inward struggle? No, it is not necessary; for the great fulfilled promise, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed," is the primal historical fact that renders the salvation of any man possible. Woe to him between whom and the seed of the serpent there is no more, not even at long intervals, any conflict. But the Christian realizes the antagonism with exceeding sensitiveness.

V. 19. *For the good that I would do.* That I wish to accomplish. The ideal Christian never reaches his ideal of Christian usefulness. *The evil*

V. 20:—*Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

V. 21:—*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

. . . *that I do.* This word “do” is not the same as in the first clause. The apostle says in substance: I do wish to accomplish good, but that sinful element seems ever present in me to prevent me; I do not wish to practice or follow after evil, but it seems to me that I follow after it in spite of myself. So Paul is not meaning to say that he tries to do good, and yet at the same time to express a morbid depreciation of the value of his Christian work. It is only a sad confession that however nearly right he may do, or however much good, it is done in the face of an enemy who opposes him in his very camp—and this enemy is his own sinful nature.

V. 20. *Now if I do*, etc. Paul concludes from the foregoing that it is really not his true, responsible self that does the evil which he so laments, but that it is the alter ego, that other “I,” which he here calls sin, or the sinful principle which yet dwelt in him. (But he who *dwells* in me is not “I,” for I can not dwell in myself). In verse 18 he calls it “my flesh,” in verse 24 he calls it “the body of this death,” in vi. 6 he calls it our “old man.” If we will remember that Paul is necessarily using words in a more or less figurative sense, and instead of straining his figures, rather observe his thought, there will be no difficulty in following him.

V. 21. *I find then a law.* This inward spiritual conflict, these daily battles, these fallings and risings

V. 22:—*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*

V. 23:—*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

again, which the apostle has been describing, are neither accidental nor incidental, but are a characteristic principle of his life, and of the life of every Christian. And this characteristic and ever operating principle Paul here calls a law.

V. 22. *I delight in the law*, etc. See verse 16. An unregenerate man could scarcely be represented as saying, "I delight in the law of God." *After the inward man*. This expression qualifies the "I." He means simply that I as a regenerate man delight, etc. His use, however, of the word "inward man," as descriptive of himself as a regenerate man, is very natural; as he had figuratively, in verse 18, called his other self, or himself in the other aspect, "the flesh," which is outward, so here he speaks of the inward. In 2 Cor. iv. 16, however, the expression "outward man" denotes our physical life, or simply the "body," while "inward man," in the same verse, is not the soul *as such*, but the soul as regenerated and devoted to Christ's service. It is only such a soul that is daily renewed or refreshed. "Spiritual man," and "inward man," are expressions standing opposed to "carnal man," or fleshly man, or "natural man," or man as he is by nature.

V. 23. *I see another law*. This other law is the same as that mentioned in verse 21, on which see the note. *The law of my mind*. This law is the

V. 24:—*O wretched man than I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

law or principle, according to which he delights in the law of God. **The law of sin.** The law of sin is that persistent and domineering dictation of the sinful principle which Paul has so often said still dwells in him. It is called the "mind of the flesh" in Col. ii. 18. It is not the same as the law mentioned in verse 21.

So we have in these three verses four different laws: (1) The law that when I would do good, etc., verse 21; (2) The law of God, verse 22; (3) The law of *my* mind (not the mind of the "flesh"), according to which law I delight in No. 2; (4) The law of sin. All these may be called laws, because they operate upon us as forces in a uniform way.

V. 24. **O wretched man.** Not, O guilty man! This might have been the language of a convicted, but unconverted man; here, however, it is the "I" of verse 22 who speaks in eager longing for a deliverer from the ever-wearying conflict. Instead, however, of speaking of the enemy here as "our old man," or "my flesh," etc., he speaks of it as the "body of this death." This figure may have been suggested by either one or all of the following circumstances:

(1) The use of the word captivity in the preceding verse. He is led as a captive, and the body to which he is captive is so loathsome to him that it may well be called a dead body. He does not mean that he longs for deliverance from his own body, but from sin's body. Or,

(2) By the fact that sin and death may well be

V. 25:—*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

called only two names for one and the same thing. To be Sin's captive is to be Death's captive. Or sin is Death's body; or, death is Sin's fruit. They are always associated together in some way. Death has no sting, no victory, no loathsomeness, no any thing, that is not obtained from sin. Or,

(3) By a recurrence in thought to the fact that sin as to him (Paul) had been crucified (vi. 6), and that still to its crucified and loathsome body (called the old man) he is bound as a captive.

Paul's metaphors vary as he changes the point of view from which he looks at his object. We must as nearly as possible stand on his ground if we would rightly appreciate his language.

V. 25. *Thanks be to God*, etc. This language is also the outburst of the "I" of verse 21. It is not an answer to the question of verse 24. Paul, however, knows that there is a way of deliverance; he knows that the conflict, the captivity, or under whatever aspect it may be viewed, will not end in sin's favor; and this thought is the ground of his thanksgiving. But as he can not think of deliverance and of the complete overthrow of sin without also thinking of Christ, so neither could he say "I thank God" without also saying "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

So then. In view of what, or as follows from what, has been said. *With the mind I myself serve.* Rather, I myself with the mind serve. That is my real, true self, as opposed to that other so-called

self, which Paul again designates "the flesh." The one and the same man Paul felt the presence in him of two principles, or elements, at one and the same time—the renewed and the unrenewed, the spirit and the flesh, etc.; and with one of these he served God, with the other he served sin. But as Paul had but one *personality*, the one with which he served God was his real self.

The life of the Christian in this world must always be more or less one of spiritual conflict; but it is also true that the Christian may at all times say, "I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and for the same reason that Paul said it.

DELIVERANCE AND SECURITY.

(Chap. VIII., 1-39.)

In further unfolding the doctrine of sanctification, begun with chapter vi., Paul sets forth in this chapter the nature of the deliverance wrought by the Holy Spirit in the believer; which work, he has said, is guaranteed by his doctrine of justification by faith. The chapter is an enlargement upon the thought already sketched in chapter v. 1-11, to wit: The security of the believer, and hence the certainty of his final salvation and glorification. In view of this security the apostle breathes throughout the chapter a spirit of joyous exultation, in which the following arguments are apparent:

1. Condemnation removed and spiritual life secured, verses 1-11, the review of a thought already presented.

2. Adoption as sons of God, etc., verses 12-17.

3. Hope of a yet greater deliverance, and strength, in the midst of trials, 18-30.

Chap. VIII., v. 1:—*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

The chapter closes with a grand hymn of assurance of salvation—"the blessedness of God's child, who lies in his bosom in full faith of eternal love."

The Christian state of deliverance and security, which Paul so feelingly describes in this chapter, is not to be regarded as following chapter vii. 14-25 *chronologically*; for the Christian may realize both his freedom from condemnation, and also all else that is affirmed of him in this chapter as being the work of the Spirit, and *at the same time* have in him the sense of painful conflict between the "old man" and the "new," as described in the last section of chapter vii. It does not follow, however, that all Christians equally experience this conflict, or that the same Christian experiences it equally at all times. But, however variable or intense the experience may be, it is the privilege of every Christian to join with Paul in the triumphant hymn with which he closes the chapter.

V. 1. *There is therefore.* The "therefore" connects immediately with vii. 25, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; there is therefore now no condemnation," etc. But Paul applies the conclusion not only to himself, but to all who are in Christ Jesus. It would amount to the same thing, however, if we should say that the "therefore," with which this chapter opens, introduces us to the grand conclusion which follows from all that the apostle has said on the subject of the sanctification of the believer, his relation to the law, etc., beginning as far back as chapter vi.;

or, in other words still, it introduces the conclusion which results from Paul's answers to all the objections which had been brought against his doctrine of salvation, and which have been discussed in the notes on the preceding chapters. These objections being answered, and the doctrine of justification and sanctification being thus established, it follows that there is now no condemnation to any one to whom the Holy Spirit has applied this plan of salvation.

The word *now* is inserted by the apostle simply to remind the believer that in the state in which he was formerly his condemnation was a dread fact, whereas, in his present state there is none, and there can never be any; it was removed by justification, and is kept away by sanctification—that is, by our being in Christ Jesus; it was removed by Christ as the one who died and is kept away by Christ as the one who is risen and lives. This is the distinction implied, or rather expressed in other words, in chapter v. 9. This Christ, who by his death and life removes and ever afterward withholds condemnation, will also remove it from our bodies, as Paul states in verses 11 and 24, on which see notes.

Who are in Christ Jesus. Those who by faith are in spiritual union with him, as the branch is with the vine. This union began when they died with him, and continues after they have risen with him. See notes on vi. 1-11. Observe that Paul here places the mediatorial name, Christ, first.

Who walk not after the flesh, etc. These words merely describe those who are in Christ Jesus. Only the latter expression occurs in verse 4. To “walk after the flesh” in this and verse 4, means to sin willfully; it does not mean to sin in the sense in

V. 2:—*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

which every Christian sins, or at least the "old man" which still exists in a more or less vital and active state in every Christian (vi. 14-25). To "walk after the Spirit" is to live according to the spirit of Christ, or the Holy Spirit. When Christ was on earth he was *with* his disciples in the body; now he is *in* them in the person of the Spirit. In order that he may be in them it is necessary that they should be in him. The sap of the vine can not be in the branch unless the branch is in the vine.

V. 2. *The law of the Spirit*, etc. Paul often uses the word law. It always means a principle or rule of action. Sometimes the rule of action referred to is the Mosaic Moral Law; sometimes the Mosaic Ceremonial Law, or the Mosaic Law as a whole, or the law which is written only on man's heart. Here it means the invariable rule, according to which the life-giving Spirit, which is in us by reason of our union with Christ, must free us from that other law called "the law of sin and death," and which has already been explained. See particularly chapter vii. 11, 23. We have ever to fight sin even in ourselves; but we fight it as our enemy; we do not serve it as our master whose behests we willingly obey. We have been liberated from the master whom we now hate, though he endeavors to reduce us to servitude again. But there is no more any condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

V. 3. *For*. What I have said in verse 2 is true, *for* what the law could not do, etc. Paul here uses

V. 3:—*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:*

the word "law" in the sense of the Mosaic law considered as a rule of action whereby to obtain salvation. This "law" was unable to free us from that other law, called the "law" of sin and death. One rule of action of course has no power to free us from another rule of action to which we have become accustomed; and in this case especially was the Mosaic law, or the law written only on the heart, powerless to accomplish our deliverance; for it was weak through the flesh—that is, we naturally loved the old law or rule of sin too well. This inability of the Mosaic or any other divine law to accomplish our salvation Paul has already discussed at length in chapter vii. He mentions it again here in order to set forth the more prominently the only way whereby it could be accomplished.

What the law could not do. What was it that the law could not do? The answer is, It could not condemn or crush sin in the flesh, and hence effect our deliverance therefrom, in order that the righteousness of God might be fulfilled in us, etc.

God sending his own Son. The word "sending" is in the Greek an aorist participle, and denotes that the act of sending and the act of condemning were simultaneous—that is, so closely identified as to be practically one and the same act. At the very moment the Son of God took upon himself human flesh and human nature was sin condemned. The law had denounced, forbidden, fulminated against sin; had *pronounced* condemnation upon it again and

again; but in vain. Sin held his ground. But in the human flesh and human nature of the Son of God there is one instance in which sin had no throne, no dominion whatever. And this sinless Son of God in human flesh and nature was an ever-living and effective rebuke of sin, and also an abiding illustration of what the human would be if the sin were not in it. The life of every pure and good man is, in its degree, a more effective condemnation of sin than is the law. The sinful can withstand the law, but it can not withstand the sinless. Hence, those whose deeds are evil love darkness rather than light. The demons beseech Christ to leave them. "What have we to do with thee, thou Holy One?" They feel condemned in his presence. "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

In the likeness of sinful flesh. Christ's human flesh and human nature were *like* man's, only his had no sin in them, and nothing to which sin could successfully address itself. "The Prince of this world hath nothing in me." But man's nature is corrupt to begin with, and his fleshly appetites and passions are sin's best instruments. But were not the flesh and nature of the first Adam sinless? Yes; and the first Adam lacked no weapon in his combat with sin which the second had.

For sin. This means that the sending of God's Son was occasioned by sin.

In using the phrase "sinful flesh," we must bear in mind that the flesh is intrinsically neither sinful nor sinless. God made the flesh with all its original appetites and passions, and apart from the personal soul or spirit which operates through it, it can be neither sinful nor sinless, or possess any moral character.

V. 4:—*That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

V. 4. *That the righteousness of the law.* “That” here means “in order that,” and not “so that;” it denotes a purpose and not a mere result. The “righteousness of the law” is that righteousness which the law demands. It is a mistake to suppose that the law of God requires one kind or degree of righteousness and the gospel of God another. There is no sort of antagonism between God’s law and God’s gospel. The trouble with the law is that it can not enforce in man its own demands—and the reason here assigned is, that it is “weak through the flesh;” our sinful nature is stronger in us than God’s law. The excellency of the gospel is, that it changes the evil nature and makes it the law’s ally. The excellency of the law (the Mosaic moral law, or the Sermon on the Mount, for instance) consists in the fact that it makes known to us what sort of righteousness God requires. The purpose which God had in view in sending his Son and condemning sin in the flesh was that the righteousness which God requires might be accomplished in us. And it actually is. That was the purpose of the plan of salvation as a whole, and hence was the ultimate purpose or end to which every detail of that plan looked. When it is accomplished in the case of any individual man he is both *saved* and *safe*; though he does not reach the consummation of his salvation until he attains to what Paul, in verse 30, calls glorification, on which see note. *Who walk not*, etc. See on verse 1.

V. 5. *For.* What is the force here of this many-

V. 5:—*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*

V. 6:—*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

tongued little word “for?” Does it mean that the fact stated in this verse is the reason or ground of that stated in the former—that is, that the former is true *because* the latter is true? This seems to be its force, and hence we may paraphrase thus: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and the reason why we walk not after the flesh is, we are not in the fleshly or natural state, and the reason why we do walk after the Spirit is, we *are* in the spiritual state; *for* those who are “after the flesh”—that is, who are in the fleshly or unregenerate state, do mind or pursue those things which gratify such a state; whereas those who are according to the Spirit, those who are in the regenerate state, do pursue those things which gratify such a state. This regenerate state is the characteristic of those in whom has been actually accomplished, or fulfilled, the “righteousness of the law.”

V. 6. *For.* This “for” also means because, as in the last verse; it is explanatory. Why do “they that are after the flesh,” or unregenerate, aspire after the things of the flesh? Because to be unregenerate, or carnally minded, naturally tends to death—that is, more and more to separation from God. The mind of the flesh, or the unregenerate mind, is only following the bent of its nature in seeking its gratification along the path that leads farther and farther from

V. 7:—*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God : for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

God. And that is the reason why it does so. The compulsion is from within.

But why do "they that are after the Spirit" (the regenerate) aspire after the things of the Spirit? Because those who are spiritually minded are only following the bent of their regenerate nature in seeking gratification along a path which leads to *life* and *peace*—nearer and nearer to God. The compulsion is again from within. What is meant here by *peace*? It does not mean reconciliation with God, for that the regenerate one, or spiritually minded, already has. It means the "inward feeling of tranquillity," the "holy calm breathed over the soul by the Holy Spirit pouring forth God's love upon the heart."

V. 7. *Because the carnal mind.* The mind of the flesh. The meaning is the same as in verses 5 and 6. *Is enmity against God.* The characteristic and inalienable feature of the aspirations of the flesh is hostility to God. The only thing that the "flesh" knows or regards is its own gratification, and in this God opposes it; hence its necessary hostility to God. Because of this it proceeds along its path to death, as stated in verse 6.

For it is not subject, etc. This second clause of the verse is the ground or reason of the statement made in the first. What is called the mind of the flesh, or the carnal mind, is hostile to God because God, or God's law, is hostile to it; and it can no more change its nature than God can change his nature, or his law. Hence, there is no possible way whereby it

V. 8:—*So then they that are in the flesh can not please God.*

can ever become subject to, or in harmony with, God's law. When the person becomes regenerated his "carnal mind" becomes separated from himself, and we have the duality, the two "I's," the "I," and the "yet not I" of chapter vii. 14-25; one of these, the "carnal mind," maintains its hostility inevitably and persistently so long as it has any existence.

V. 8. *So then.* From the preceding statement it follows that, etc. The word which Paul wrote, and which is here rendered "so then," is the little particle *de* which ordinarily means *but*. If it be so rendered here the meaning becomes: For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; but (on the contrary) it can not please God. The Revised Version, Godet, Gifford, Ellicott, Bengel, Wicliff, Tyndale, etc., prefer to render it "and:" The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God . . . *and* they that are in the flesh can not please God. This is the simplest view to take of the word, but the sense conveyed is not materially different from that of the rendering of the Authorized Version, with which rendering agree Beza, Calvin, Flatt, Koppe, and the Geneva Version of 1557.

Can not please God. Because the controlling motive or principle of the unrenewed mind is the desire to please itself and not God; and as it is the motive or principle from which our actions proceed that gives them moral character, of course those which proceed from a wrong principle, or character in ourselves can not render us pleasing to God. They may be right in themselves, but they are not done *as right*.

V. 9:—*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

It is easy to see that nothing that one does to me in his relation of enemy to me can render him pleasing to me; and those who are in the flesh, as already explained, stand, and can stand, only in a relation of enmity to God. The moment this relation ceases, that moment they cease to be “in the flesh.”

V. 9. *But ye.* The *ye* is emphatic. But as for you, ye are not in the flesh. *But in the Spirit.* Renewed, regenerated. The ruling principle of life is essentially different from that of those who are in the flesh, or unrenewed, *if so be*, provided that, the Spirit of God *dwell* in you. The indwelling must be a permanent fact, and not a mere spasmodic and occasional outburst of enthusiasm. It is characteristic of St. Paul that he first expresses his strong and loving confidence in his readers in the absolute assertion, “*Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,*” and then remembering [as it were] that so unqualified a statement could not be safely applied to all, he adds by way of caution, and stimulus to self-examination, the condition upon which his statement concerning them necessarily depends.” (Gifford.) And this condition here is, If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Have not the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit of God is in this clause called the Spirit of Christ, which is a proof of the divinity of Christ. The Spirit of God, or the spirit of Christ, dwells in the renewed heart as the Holy Spirit. In this indwelling consists

V. 10:—*And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*

the believer's vital union with Christ, without which he is but a dead branch.

V. 10. *And if Christ be in you.* He who in verse 9 was called "the Spirit of God" and "the spirit of Christ," is here called Christ himself. Compare Eph. iii. 16, 17. Christ, in speaking to his disciples, said: "And if I go . . . I will come again." See John xiv. 3, 16, 17, 18. He dwells in the believer in the person of the Spirit, who is that other Paraclete.

The body is dead. Physical death. The idea is: If Christ be in you in the manner described, though the body is still subject to physical death, and will actually die, because of sin, yet the Spirit is life, etc. The effect upon the human race of Christ's death and resurrection was not intended to be the abolition of physical death as a racial fact, though it did render possible the translation of an Enoch or an Elijah (for his death and resurrection were already certainties in the mind of God, even from the beginning). Death, as a racial fact, will continue until the final consummation of Christ's work, when death itself shall be abolished. 1 Cor. xv. 26.

Because of sin. Physical death as a racial fact exists as a fact because of sin, the first sinner's sin being the starting point and cause of all. Apart from sin, or prior to the first sin, the human body was capable of dying, and in this sense we may say it was mortal; it was also capable of not dying, and in this sense we may say it was immortal. Sin caused it to

lose the capability of not dying, except where the omnipotent God intervenes to prevent, as in the case of Enoch and Elijah. And hence it amounts to nothing to say that, If I should violate no physical law I would not die; for, aside from any other consideration, the fact of sin makes it certain that I will violate physical laws. I was born with the seeds of death in me, for my parents and remoter ancestors violated them before me. I may or may not be able to name any *specific* sin that caused this or that man's blindness or death; there may be none to name; and yet sin, the great fact of sin, is the cause of both blindness and death, whether it be *my* sin, in the sense of my act or not. The sins of others caused the sinless Christ to suffer unto death, for if there had been no sin he would not and could not have suffered.

The spirit is life. The word Spirit is here printed in the present copies of the Authorized Version, with a capital S, indicating that the Spirit of Christ is the Holy Spirit. Originally, however, it was not so printed in the Authorized Version. The Revised Version and the Greek printed editions have a small letter. The meaning is that although the body is dead, or doomed to die, because of sin, the spirit, or soul, or that part which constitutes one a responsible moral agent, is alive. Christ says "I am the life," and his life comes into the soul of the believer and becomes its very life, or rather causing it to become life itself, whereas it was once dead in sin.

Because of righteousness. What does the word righteousness here mean? Does it mean *rightness*, or the state of being rightened, or holiness? It is the same word which is often elsewhere rendered justification; and this meaning is the preferable one

V. 11:—*But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

here, for we can hardly say that the spirit is life *because of* its holiness or righteousness. Its life *consists in* its righteousness, and is not *because of* it. The spirit is life because of its righteousness in the sense of justification—God's plan of justification, which in i. 17 is called "God's righteousness." It is through this plan that life is communicated to the soul, and quickens man from his spiritual death. If it had not been for this plan the soul could not have been so quickened.

V. 11. ***But if.*** Paul here informs his readers that the body also, though now "dead," shall also share in this quickening work of the spirit. ***The spirit of him that raised,*** etc. Why does he not say the Spirit of God? Because he wishes to revert to the resurrection of Jesus and thus furnish a basis for the faith of his readers in the quickening of their mortal bodies. The same spirit that did the one shall do the other provided that spirit also dwell in us.

Why does Paul in the first clause say *raised up Jesus* and in the next *raised up Christ*? Answer: Jesus was his name as a mere *person*; Christ was his *official* name, his name as denoting that he stands in a certain relation to us; and this relation is such as to make his resurrection a pledge of our resurrection, whereas the resurrection of *Jesus* considered merely as a person was not. The resurrection of Jesus proves only that God can raise us up, the resurrection of Christ proves that he will do it. I can do a certain

thing for a given person, but if that given person is my son or my brother I not only *can* but *will*.

Shall quicken your mortal bodies. He "raised" the body of Jesus; he shall "quicken" ours. There is no difference in the sense; he uses the word *quicken* because it is suggested by and corresponds to the word "dead" as applied to the body in verse 10 and to the word "mortal" here. Even the bodies of those human beings who shall be alive at the end of the world, and which therefore shall never actually die, and hence can not be *raised*, even they shall be *quicken**ed*—that is, they shall be deprived of that mortality, that something which dooms them to die; and thus the power and benefit on the body, of the indwelling Spirit of God is not restricted to those who shall actually die. The very principle itself of death is removed. (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.)

By his spirit. Through his spirit—that is, the spirit dwelling in the believer is the cause or agent that accomplishes the quickening. The indwelling of the Spirit is also the condition of the quickening, though according to the best Greek text that thought is not here expressed. The quickening of the "mortal body" is regarded by Calvin and others as denoting its deliverance from sin and misery, the ennobling of the whole sensuous nature and so perfecting it even before the believer dies. While the believer's body is undoubtedly affected thus, more or less, I do not conceive this to be the main thought of this verse. The best commentators, however, are divided. Macknight says: "Will make even your mortal bodies to perform works of righteousness." Barnes says: "The entire man, including the corrupt body, shall be made alive in the service of God." Hodge disagrees with Calvin

V. 12:—*Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*

V. 13:—*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*

and refers to 2 Cor. iv. 14, as teaching what he conceives to be the doctrine of this passage. Stuart and Philippi agree with Calvin, as does also Abbott. Meyer, Godet, Lange, and others take the other view. The passage seems to teach that the fact that the believer's body as the vessel of the Holy Spirit is the earnest of the resurrection of the believer's body. (2 Cor. v. 5.)

Paul does not tell us any thing here, or in Corinthians, of what shall be the future of the bodies of unbelievers; his object here is simply to trace the process of that salvation, on soul and body, which he is expounding. He therefore here restricts himself to the future of the believer's body, having already shown what are the legitimate effects of this salvation on the present of the believer's body. See chapter vi. 11, 12, etc., a subject to which he reverts again in verse 12, 13.

V. 12. *Therefore, brethren.* Such honor being put upon us, and such help being vouchsafed to us, by the indwelling of the Spirit, it devolves upon us to live how? According to the inclination of the corrupt nature? No, for (v. 13).

V. 13. *For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die.* This is the reason for the foregoing statement. Not merely he shall, but he *must* die. If a man (the unregenerate man) thinks he is under a sort of obli-

gation to gratify what is here called "the flesh"—a term which we have already repeatedly explained—the only future which can possibly await him is not one of a quickened mortal body such as was mentioned in verse 11, but of the very opposite. And if it were possible for the regenerate to place the emphasis of his life on eating and drinking and otherwise gratifying his lower and corrupt nature, neither could he escape the same future. But he, however, does not recognize himself as under any sort of obligation to thus gratify the flesh, but he does recognize himself as under a debt or obligation to the Spirit to live according to the Spirit. And by thus living he mortifies, or causes death, not to himself, but to the flesh; he himself shall live, and his body also shall be quickened.

The deeds of the body; or works of the body. But what is the difference between the deeds of the body (soma) and the deeds of the flesh (sarx) which Paul has also mentioned. (Gal. v. 19 and, in substance, often elsewhere.) The deeds of the body are those which are regarded simply as originating in the body; as, the body hungers, the body thirsts, has various appetites, passions, etc., with which it is endowed by the Creator, and which are therefore not in themselves sinful. If the soul, however, should co-operate with these, and yield them up to their full gratification, they would cease to be mere deeds of the body and become deeds or works of the flesh; and the person who does this is said to walk or live after the flesh. To mortify these "deeds" of the body is to bring them within the control of our regenerate nature by means of the Spirit dwelling in us. By so doing the "flesh," or corrupt nature, is more and more driven

V. 14:—*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

out, or restricted in its territory, so to speak; and thus the body instead of becoming with increasing intensity the slave of the "flesh" becomes increasingly the slave of the renewed spirit. Its appetites or lusts are suppressed or crushed before they develop into sinfulness. And this person goes on to that "life" which the Apostle has already described as being the destiny of the one "who lives after the Spirit."

V. 14. **For.** Paul here assigns the reason why those who, through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, shall live. Those who do this are, in doing it, moved and guided by the Spirit, and those who are thus moved and guided are the sons of God, otherwise they would not thus yield themselves to his Spirit. But it is impossible to conceive of a son of God, one who is dear to God, as not living. They derive their life from him. While, as a matter of fact, the being "led by the Spirit," is both a *cause* of sonship and a *proof* of sonship. If, however, the idea of sonship as here presented is that of adoption into the family of God, as distinguished from our justification as guilty and condemned sinners, it would seem that the Apostle refers to the leading of the Spirit as the *proof* rather than as the *cause* of sonship. So far, therefore, as this verse is concerned, instead of saying: Why does God lead us by his Spirit? Answer: Because we are his sons—we should rather say: How do we know, or what proof have we that we are the sons of God? Answer: The fact that we are led by his Spirit is the

V. 15:—*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

V. 16:—*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

proof. Where this proof is wanting the essential proof is wanting. The subject of sonship, or adoption, is presented in various aspects in the New Testament.

V. 15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage*, etc. The "spirit of bondage" means the low, cringing, fearing spirit that characterizes bondmen. The motive or spirit which causes them to serve is fear of the master, and nothing higher or purer or more joyous. But this was not the kind of spirit which "ye received" when ye were freed from condemnation as sinners, regenerated, and adopted into the family of God. But the spirit which ye received was *the Spirit of adoption*—the spirit or disposition which characterizes sons and not bondmen, and who address God as a loving Father, and not as a tyrannical Master. The word *abba* is the Jewish or Aramaic word meaning father. Paul translated it into Greek (*pater*) for his Greek readers, and from this we have it translated into English.

V. 16. *The Spirit itself*. The Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit. The word Spirit in the Greek (*pneuma*) is in the neuter gender, and hence the neuter pronoun *itself* is here used. Using the word otherwise than from the stand-point of the Greek gender, we should say "the Spirit Himself." The testimony of the Holy Spirit concurs with that of our own consciousness that we are the children of God. The heart in filial

V. 17:—*And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

love cries, Father, thou art my Father, and the Father responds, My child, yes, thou art my child. This is the Spirit bearing testimony with spirit. Observe the three proofs of sonship: 1. Led by the Spirit (verse 14). 2. The disposition or feeling of filial love, called "the spirit of adoption" (verse 15). 3. The testimony of the Holy Spirit (verse 16), which comes to us in the form of the inward comfort which we experience, the incitements to prayer which he awakens within us, the promptings to works of love, the repugnance to sin, which the Christian has, etc.

The Apostle, in verse 14, uses the expression "sons of God;" here he says "children of God." The former, among the Jews, was a title of honor and privilege, the latter an expression of endearment, denoting that the "sons" were not only "sons," but that they were natural or dear sons.

V. 17. *If children, then heirs.* Were all children heirs according to the Roman law? Yes, sons and daughters, and even adopted children, shared equally in the inheritance. But not so in the Jewish law, daughters being excluded except in the event there were no sons. Paul here announces the law of God's Fatherhood and of Christ's Brotherhood. All the children share alike in the inheritance which Christ has reclaimed. In what does this inheritance consist? The only one word that can express it is "Himself"—God himself (1 Cor. xv. 28). How then can we speak of this inheritance as being reclaimed

V. 18:—*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

or procured by Christ for all believers? Because of the fact that by reason of what Christ is, what he did, what he still does—in short, through Christ and through him alone, can God ever impart himself to the believer.

If so be that we suffer with him. With Christ. Joint suffering with Christ is the condition of joint heirship with Christ. Paul often speaks of the fellowship of believers with Christ in his sufferings. (See 1 Thes. iii. 3; 2 Cor. i. 5; Col. i. 24; 2 Tim. i. 8, etc. See also 1 Peter iv. 13, and other references.) Nothing so unites two or more persons as a common suffering in a common cause. But whether or not any given person be called in reality to suffer for Christ's sake, or in Christ's cause, he *must* share ideally those sufferings which Christ bore for his sake, if he would share with Christ the inheritance of glory. As he bore our cross, so we must bear his; if we would share his crown of glory we must share his crown of thorns. And it is possible to do this without being called to actual objective or outside suffering for the sake of Christ's cause. Unless the suffering of one soul becomes in a certain true sense the suffering of the other, the two souls are not truly united.

V. 18. ***For I reckon.*** I calculate, I conclude, after thinking about it. By the mention of suffering, of which he had had the severest experiences because of his union with Christ, Paul is reminded of the future, and of what is meant by being glorified with

V. 19:—*For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

Christ. As compared with the glories which shall be revealed, or made manifest in us and unto us in that day of glorification, he says that the present sufferings are not worth thinking of, and Paul knew what it was to suffer. (2 Cor. iv. 17.) He bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, and they were marks of suffering. (Gal. vi. 17.)

V. 19. *For.* What has the statement in this verse to do with that in the preceding, that it should be linked to it by a “for,” or because? The question has been variously answered: (1) According to Godet the connection is: That this present age is one of suffering is evident *for* the whole creation, etc. (2) The reference according to this and the following opinions is to the revelation of glory in and unto us, “the sons of God.” This revelation is *certain, for*, or as is evident from the fact that, the whole creation waits for it; this is the view of Meyer and many others. (3) That this revelation will be grand and *glorious* is evident *for* the whole creation, etc. Other views have been held by various commentators, but the third, which is the view of Hodge, Alford, and others, seems to me to be the most natural. It was the grandeur of the glorious revelation which the Apostle emphasized in the preceding verse, and not its certainty, futurity, or reality, though all these elements are as a matter of fact present in the statement in that verse.

Earnest expectation. This is one word in the Greek (apokaradokia). It denotes an attitude of up-

lifted head, and eye intently gazing in the direction from which the thing expected is to come. The word *waiteth for* implies an extension of the hand as if in the act of receiving that which is not as yet within reach.

The creature. Does this mean the rational creature, man? Or simply Christians? Or are those who are not Christians also included? Or does it mean things created in general, including the irrational as well as the rational? Or does it mean the irrational creature exclusively? All of these and several other questions have been answered in the affirmative. It is best, however, to take the word as denoting, not the rational, but the whole irrational creation animate and inanimate. This is the view of Chrysostom, Calvin, Grotius, Bloomfield, Meyer, Godet, Hodge, and most commentators. The reasons for preferring this view will appear as we observe the use of the words "creature" and "creation" in the following verses. Meanwhile it may be noticed that Christians, or the "sons of God," can not be included here within the scope of the meaning of the word "creature," for they are the ones for whose manifestation or complete redemption and glorification "the creature" is represented as longing. All nature, animate and inanimate, is represented by a figure of speech as being on the outlook and waiting with outstretched hands for man's complete redemption, and all nature will share with man in this redemption.

V. 20. **For the creature.** The same as in preceding verse—the whole irrational creation animate and inanimate. **Was made subject.** Was subjected. **To vanity.** This word here denotes the

V. 20:—*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.*

frailty, and abnormal condition generally, which is due to corruption. Nature shares the ills which came of human sin. All things were cursed on man's account, even the very ground, whether the curse began to operate, in the first place, through "natural law" or through supernatural. Had it not been for human negligence and other sins, even the roses and other flowers of Eden would never have degenerated into wild weeds, and briars, and thorns. When the race on earth shall itself become reclaimed so will it reclaim nature's wastes and wild growths. If the human race on earth shall ever again be wholly subjected to God, nature again will be wholly subjected to it, and no longer to "vanity." There shall be a new earth.

Not willingly. Nature is personified in these verses and is here represented as being subjected not voluntarily, or of its own will, but by a will or power outside of itself. This is a proof that the "creature," or "creation," does not mean mankind, for man became subject to "vanity" of his own will. But as man was not made so at the outset, so neither was nature. Both became so; the one voluntarily, and the other because fallen man can live only in a fallen world. As the former will rise, so will the latter.

But by reason of him. Of whom? Some say Adam; others, man; others, the tempter—that is, the devil. The majority, though not all, of the best commentators, rightly it seems to me, make the words refer to God. Nature was subjected to

V. 21:—*Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

“vanity” by God as the *moving* cause, though of course man’s sin or corruption may be regarded as the moral cause. (The usual meaning of the Greek preposition *dia* with the accusative is *on account of*, but according to Winer and other New Testament Greek authorities, it may also be rendered *by*, and this is cited as one instance among the number. It makes a better sense.)

Who subjected the same in hope. Literally, on the hope. The subjection of nature was based, or conditioned on a hope of future redemption. But who was it that entertained the hope? Was it God, or “the creature” (nature)? Evidently nature, creation, “the creature.” But how can nature be said to have a hope? By the same figure of speech by which in the first part it is said to be in an attitude of expectation and waiting. But for what does it hope? It hopes for deliverance, as stated in next verse.

V. 21. **Because.** Or simply *that*. While the creature was by the will of God subjected to frailty, decay, barrenness, degradation, it was subjected on the condition of the hope that it should share with the “sons of God” deliverance from the bondage of corruption at the time of the restitution of all things. God did not form the earth to be a waste, and it shall not continue to be so. (See Isaiah xi.; lxvi. 22; Psalm cii. 26, 27; 2 Peter iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1., etc.)

Nature, or creation, is represented as being “bound” to corruption, as man himself became the

V. 22:—*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*

bond-servant of sin. When the latter is freed so shall the former be. The curse, or in other words, all the inconveniences, decays, deaths, discords, etc., entailed by sin and corruption upon man and nature, shall be removed from the one as it is from the other; and renewed man shall live in a renewed world. How unlike this one we are not told; it *may* be as unlike it as the "old man" is unlike the "new;" as our present "corruptible" body shall be unlike our "incorruptible." We need not raise the question whether nature shall be thus changed *absolutely* or only relatively—that is, only *seeming* to be changed because of the changed attitude of him who shall inhabit it. In either case the time will come when "December shall be as pleasant as May," and there shall be no more sickness and sorrow produced either by physical or moral causes.

V. 22. ***For we know.*** This verse is the proof of the hoping for deliverance on the part of the creature as stated in the preceding verse. Paul says "we know." We know *what*? The *fact* that nature or creation groans and travails, so great is its pain. *Creation* here is the same Greek word as *creature* in the former verses. We know by experience and observation the *fact* that it groans. Pain, discord, death, etc., are as marked a characteristic of the irrational creature as of the rational; and the correspondences of these features, by whatever name they may be called are as visible in inanimate nature as they are in the animate. The fact is obvious even to the most

V. 23:—*And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*

unlettered. He who does nothing but sow and reap and till the soil often says that the seasons seem to be awry; and earth, air, and water are said to abound in death-producing germs. Creature destroys creature. Nature has become unnatural; but it is orderly in its disorder. But in the day of deliverance nature will again become natural.

Together. Together with what? Each part “groans and travails” together with other parts.

Until now. Paul means that it has been doing so ever since sin and corruption were introduced into the world. Had he been writing in our day he would still have said “until now.”

V. 23. *And not only they.* Not only the various created things, which we call nature or the creation. Paul here expressly distinguishes between what he has called “the creature,” or “creation,” and “we ourselves” or Christians, the sons of God. *Which have the first-fruits of the spirit.* This clause defines who is meant by the “we ourselves.” The Christian has only a partial deliverance from sin and its awful consequences in this world as it is. He can not know all that is comprehended in the words complete redemption, including the redemption of the body. Now we have only the first-fruits; after a while we shall have the full harvest. Now we have the Spirit himself, who is the first-fruits; then we shall have this and more. *Waiting for the*

V. 24:—*For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*

adoption. Not for our adoption as sons of God, for that has already taken place (verse 15), but that public adoption of us which shall take place at the redemption of our bodies, when all angels and men shall *know* that we are the sons of God, and we shall come into the full possession and enjoyment of our inheritance. ***The redemption of our body.*** The body itself shall be redeemed. It is material, corruptible, mortal, now; then it shall be spiritual, incorruptible, immortal—a glorified body. (1 Cor. xv.; 2 Cor. v. 4.) The “child of God” now is also a “child of the dust,” but then he shall no longer be a child of the dust.

V. 24. **For.** This word refers to the groaning and waiting of verse 23. We groan . . . waiting. Why? For or because ***we are saved by hope.*** The Revised Version reads: *By hope were we saved.* This expression does not mean that hoping on our part is the instrument whereby we are saved, but that it is rather the manner. We were saved in hope. We were saved so far by being placed in such relation to God as to impel us to hope; and when this something more is realized, our salvation will be fully accomplished. This something more is, in part, the redemption of our body. The very fact that we hope implies that our redemption is not yet completed; all that salvation means even to the body is not yet realized; else why should we be impelled to hope. And the Apostle has abundantly shown that it is a hope which shall not be disappointed, or make us ashamed. (See verse 5, etc.)

V. 25:—*But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

V. 26:—*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered.*

V. 27:—*And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

V. 25. This verse continues the thought of the preceding. The word *patience* here, as in verse 5 and elsewhere, implies a large element of perseverance, continued endurance. He who continues to hope continues to endure whatever suffering lies between him and that which he hopes for. He who despairs will not push on through suffering.

Vs. 26, 27. *Likewise.* In verse 22 Paul spoke of the groaning of the whole creation; in verse 23, the groaning of ourselves; while in this verse he speaks of the groaning of the Holy Spirit.

Helpeth our infirmities. By helping us to pray. Besides the natural “groanings” and “longings” of the regenerate heart, the Holy Spirit himself inspires other mute and wordless prayers, which God, however, can hear and interpret. Sometimes the soul may experience moments of fainting under its burden of suffering and longing. The Holy Spirit prays, groans, maketh intercession *in that soul*, though all that human ear may hear is, “O Lord, I need something, but I know not what I need.” God hears and knows the rest, for he searches the heart and sees what it needs, what the voiceless groaning means.

According to the will of God. All the

V. 28:—*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

prayers, longings, groanings, which the Holy Spirit inspires in the soul and in behalf of the soul are according to or in harmony with the will of God. He dictates them, so to speak, to the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit to the human spirit; but as the human spirit knows not the language of God, they reach it and go back to God only as unutterable groans.

V. 28. *And we know*, etc. Paul here states additional encouragement to the Christian in the midst of his trials. *All things work together.* Work together with one another and with the believers; they all work to the same end. Not only God and the Spirit, but all that happens or falls out to believers in this life. All things are so adjusted to them and they are so adjusted to all things, that the outworking of it all is the believer's good. *To them that love God.* Believers are here so called because only those who love God so fall in with the current of "all things," all his inruling and overruling providences, as to cause that which *God* meant for good actually to produce good. Joseph and David, for example, so fell in with the divine current, and hence their severe afflictions resulted in their good. Pharaoh did not, and he was "ground to powder."

To those who are called according to his purpose. The word purpose here means something fixed beforehand. Those who love God, and those who are called according to God's pre-established design, are the same persons. Paul has no thought

V. 29:—*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

whatever of saying that only those who are thus called love God. But those who love God are always the called according to his purpose. And the fact that they are thus called is what makes all things work together for their good; for if the lovers of God had been called to a life and destiny out of harmony with God's pre-established design and order of all things, how then could all things have worked together with them for their good. The very words *work together* imply harmony between "all things" and the purpose of the believer's call; for if there is no harmony they do not work together. The last clause of the verse is a blessed addition to the foregoing part. God has no purpose in regard to any thing whatsoever that is not in harmony with the good of those who love him, and that does not have that good in view.

V. 29. Paul in this and the following verse states plainly his reason for saying that all things—the "groanings" of the human spirit, the "groanings" of the Holy Spirit in the human spirit, all things whatsoever, work together for the good of them that love God. *For whom he did foreknow.* Those whom God foreknew would love him; or, in other words, fulfill the condition of salvation—that is, have faith. God evidently knew from eternity that some human beings would be saved, and that in order to be saved they would comply with the condition of salvation. He foreknew that some would resist his Spirit, and that others would not. It is his knowl-

edge of those who would not resist his Spirit that is here spoken of. Nothing is said in regard to those who would resist him, for the passage is written simply for the comfort and encouragement of Christians; it is a sure ground for the hope of their future glorification.

He did also predestinate. Those whom God saw from eternity would have faith, he predestinated, or solemnly and irrevocably determined should be conformed to the image of his Son. His word is pledged; his decree has gone forth; it shall be done; and this is the immovable basis of our belief in, not only the preservation of the believer, but also his glorification. What God predestinates is, not that any man shall believe or not believe; but that having believed, he shall be conformed, etc. That this is the teaching of the passage is plain and obvious enough apart even from intricate discussion, and it is substantially the interpretation of a great many commentators of various schools. God may predestinate, or foreordain, or eternally decree, one thing or another. Here the thing predestinated is, as we have seen, the conformity of believers to the image of his Son, while in Eph. i. 5 it is their adoption as children; 1 Cor. ii. 7, it is the "hidden wisdom," or wise plan of salvation which God foreordained; in Acts iv. 28, it is simply "whatsoever." The doctrine of "predestination" is of course scriptural, and it is very comforting to the Christian. But there are some interpretations of the doctrine which are not only *not* scriptural, but are positively *anti*-scriptural. As it is true (and comforting) that God foreordained that believers should at last reach the state of heavenly glorification, so is it true that he foreordained that unbelievers should not.

It was **never** his intention that the righteous and the wicked should go to the same place, but it has always been his intention that they should not; and what are called God's decrees are only the temporal expression of God's eternal intentions—and we can know his intentions from what is revealed of his character in the Bible and in nature.

It is not difficult to see, therefore, that even the Jews and Romans (Acts iv. 28) did whatsoever God determined before should come to pass; for if God foreordained a plan of salvation, as he surely did, he must have foreordained that even every wicked act of man should fit in with that plan, otherwise the plan might prove to be a failure. But what God foreordains in regard to wickedness is the opposite, or negative, of what he foreordains in regard to righteousness; for it is just as truly the expression of God's eternal decree or eternal nature that the outflow of a wicked character should be wicked acts, as that the outflow of a righteous character should be righteous acts. If there is to be any order at all in the universe a fruit tree can not be allowed to bring forth thistles, nor a thistle tree any thing but thistles. So that, strictly speaking, a man (Judas, for example) is not condemned for his wicked acts chiefly, but for having such a character as can manifest itself only in wicked acts. And for the kind of character he has every human being is responsible.

Conformed to the image of his Son. This does not mean likeness to Christ in respect to suffering (verse 17), he being in this our pattern—that is, as Christ was made perfect as a Mediator, through suffering, so must we be made perfect. This is true, but it does not seem to be what Paul is teaching here.

V. 30:—*Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

Such, however, is the view of Calvin, Grotius, and some others. It is better to regard conformity to Christ's image as meaning likeness to his image, not in the outward circumstance of suffering, but in our nature—or in what shall more and more become our *nature*, to wit, our character, including at last, however, the outward circumstances of that character: the glorified believer and the glorified surroundings of the believer shall be like unto Christ and unto Christ's. This seems to be substantially the view of most commentators. And this, so far as the believer is concerned, is the end to which the predestination looks.

That he might be the first born among many brethren. This is the end, so far as it has reference to Christ, to which the predestination looks—that he might be leader and head of a glorified host, all of whose luster is, after all, but his own. They shine only in his splendor, and not in an angel's, for they are his brethren.

V. 30. *Them he also called.* God foreknew and predestinated in eternity, and what he thus resolved upon in eternity he takes the necessary steps, so to speak, to have accomplished in time—that is, in the first place, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, or by the formal or informal preaching of the gospel, *he called*. Whom did he call? The predestinated—that is, believers. Were not others called? Yes, for he “came to call sinners to repentance;” but Paul does not here say this. He restricts his thought

here to the predestinated, as if he had said, Whatever may be said in regard to others, one thing is certain: he did not omit to call, to extend all needed means of grace to, the predestinated—that is, to those whom he foreknew would believe if they had the opportunity. Hence, no one need have any fears on that point.

As a matter of fact, the means of grace are equally offered to those who never believe, but it does not here concern Paul's line of thought to look upon that side of the subject. Indeed, the call with him is generally, if not invariably, effectual, because he speaks of believers. Our Savior, however, in the Gospels, speaks of the call as being in many instances ineffectual. "Many are called, but few chosen" (Matt. xx. 16); which is the same as saying, All are called, but only many are chosen—few in comparison with *all*. Paul contemplates the future only of these "few." Whatever may be said of the eternal destiny of the others, they never become God's choice, his chosen ones; but it is not because they were not called in the same sense as were those who do. The rain of his grace falls alike upon the "just and the unjust."

Them he also justified. Justification is here what we have seen it to be elsewhere in this epistle, to wit: the removal from one, on account of his faith, of the condemnation which he is already under who believes not—a ceasing to be the object of God's disapprobation and becoming the object of his approbation. Of course, this relation of God and the believer is a legal relation—that is, it is one in which the attitude of the party to the divine will or nature, considered as law, is the thing involved (John iii. 18).

If the reader has kept in mind Paul's line of thought, as we have endeavored to trace it, he remem-

bers that since we entered chap. vi., the central theme has been sanctification, or the holy life which must be the outflow of the renewed heart. The renewed heart is the guaranty of the renewed life, and the renewed life implies the renewed heart, and the two together constitute sanctification. But why, then, did not Paul proceed to say, "Whom he justified he also sanctified?" The reason why he omits to mention sanctification here is, because, as he has sought to show his readers, justification would not be justification as he conceives it unless it be understood to imply sanctification. It does not imply it, however, simply in the sense in which the predestination implies the call, for between these two there is no essential relation, but only an arbitrary one, or one depending solely on the will of God. There is nothing in the *nature* of predestination that causes it to be followed by the call. But justification not only *does*, but *must*, imply sanctification; it would not be Pauline justification if it did not. Hence, there was no need of saying, Whom he justified, them he also sanctified.

Whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Justification does not in itself imply glorification; hence, the Apostle must explicitly state that the former will be followed by the latter because of the nature of God and not because of the nature of justification. But what is meant here by being glorified? It has reference to the final glorious consummation of our salvation as already explained; see note on preceding verse.

The past tense of the verbs is used throughout this verse—"called," "justified," "glorified." This does not imply, of course, that none would be called, justified, and glorified, after Paul's day. The Apostle

V. 31:—*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

looks upon these facts as so certain to be accomplished that he may truly speak of them as already accomplished even in the case of the future believer.

The reader should observe the steps in the divine process of salvation as here stated by Paul—

1. Foreknowledge.
2. Predestination.
3. The call.
4. Justification, implying sanctification.
5. Glorification.

It is the Apostle's purpose in this passage to encourage Christians; hence, it is *not* his purpose to speak of the human side of salvation; and hence, again, he makes no mention of repentance, faith, etc. He is writing *to* believers *of* believers, and, therefore, takes repentance and faith for granted. In his preaching to the jailer, however, and other unconverted persons, as reported in the Acts, he was accustomed to say, Repent, and "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

V. 31. *What shall we say?* In view of the foreknowledge, and the predestination, and the call, the justification, the glorification, all of which God is pledged by his very nature to accomplish, what shall we say? If God be for us, what matters it who may be against us? The Arch Enemy himself can not triumph over us.

V. 32. *He that spared not his own Son.* This

V. 32:—*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

V. 33:—*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

is "the climax" of proofs that God is for us. The very reference to it here by Paul implies something which we can express in *human* language only by saying that it caused the Father-heart of God the intensest pang to "spare not his own Son." If not so, how could the Apostle here mention it as a proof that he will freely give us all things? The fact that one has given a small gift is no proof that he will give a large one. But if he give a large one, how much easier is it to give a small one! But the greatness of a gift depends upon its dearness to him who gives it. If to give his Son had not cost God a most intense pang (humanly speaking), it might to us still have been a great gift, but it would not have been so to God. We may reverently say that the only good thing that it was ever hard for God to do was to give up to humiliation, suffering, and death, his own Son, and this is the only fact that gives Paul's words here any force. But he who could do that loves us well enough to freely give us any thing—all things—and in giving us all things he glorifies us, makes us sharers in all the glory of his own Son. It is not according to the nature of a *man* to so treat adopted children, especially when he has an "own son."

V. 33. *Who shall lay*, etc. The question anticipates a negative answer. Surely no one; neither conscience, nor law, nor any man, nor Satan himself.

V. 34:—*Who is he that condemneth?* It is *Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

If any one does, it will make no difference. God has justified us, and will ever justify us against the condemnations of all accusers; if he justifies, he will also glorify, causing our righteousness to shine forth as the noonday, as he did Job's, notwithstanding the accusations even of his friends and of Satan (Ps. xxxvii. 6).

God's elect. God's chosen ones. Who are they? They are those to whom and of whom Paul has been writing in all these verses. They are believers—those who have accepted Christ. Or, speaking of others, whether yet born or unborn, they are those whom God foreknows as those who will accept Christ; when they have once come upon the stage of human action as believers and justified ones, they are God's elect, and he will vindicate them against every accuser.

V. 34. *Who is he that condemneth?* Literally, "Who is the one condemning?" As there might be many accusers, so there can be but one Judge. Who is that one who will pronounce the final sentence of condemnation on the believer? Christ is the only judge of the living and dead; but it can not be he, for he died in order to prevent that very thing; and in order that his death might not be unavailing he is also risen and still lives, and by the Holy Spirit communicates to believers his own life. **At the right hand of God.** The position of highest influence and exaltation, giving the greatest degree of

V. 35:—*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

V. 36:—*As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

potency to his intercessions in the Christian's behalf. The believer's friend at court is the one who is the nearest to the throne. It is this communication of his own spiritual life to the believer, these intercessions which he makes for him in every moment of spiritual weakness or lapse, that Paul refers to in the last clause of chap. v. 10. And the Psalmist said, "He restoreth my soul"—and this he does as the one who himself still lives as the source of life.

V. 35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* A triumphant question. The "love of Christ" is evidently not our love for him, but his love for us. This is what the apostle has been speaking of. Who, in the very face of all the proofs just mentioned of his omnipotent love for us (believers), can cause him to become our enemy? Who can tear us from him, and put a distance between us and him? Christ will permit no tribulation, however severe, to come between him and the object of his love. If the object of his love suffers, however disgracefully in the world's estimation, or however loathsomely, Christ is by his side, and loves him still, and abides with him with as much self-forgetting alacrity of love in a dungeon as in a palace. Where he is whom Christ loves there will Christ be also.

V. 36. *As it is written*, etc. The mention of persecution and reward in the last verse reminds Paul

V. 37:—*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

of a passage in Ps. xliv. 22, which he quotes as being only too applicable to the Christians of his day and subsequently, and which is hardly less applicable to Christians in some parts of the world to-day. But he who suffers for Christ in any form Christ will never forsake.

V. 37. *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors.* In our very tribulations, distresses, persecutions, etc., we are more than conquerors. Our very defeats are our victories; even more than bare victories, for instead of merely conquering our enemies we win them over to our side. John Bunyan's twelve years of darkest defeat proved to be the twelve years of his most brilliant triumph. And was not Luther most mighty in behalf of the German Reformation while he was in prison at Wartburg? The fact that Paul was a prisoner gave him opportunity to preach the gospel to Cæsar's household and to write epistles which he might not otherwise have written. Christianity was spread abroad rapidly because the Christians were persecuted at Jerusalem. The more we are "killed all the day long," the more may we be "more than conquerors."

Through him that loved us. Not through his love, but through himself as the one who loved us. It is Christ in us who gains these victories. But why did Paul say *loved*, using the past tense, instead of *loves*? Simply because he had in mind the one greatest *proof* of Christ's love for us which he gave in dying for us. But he still loves us with

V. 38:—*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

V. 39:—*Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

the same love, as Paul has abundantly stated, verses 34, 35.

V. 38. *For I am persuaded.* Paul confirms the statement made in verse 37 by an enthusiastic affirmation of his own conviction that nothing whatever can separate *us*, etc. He does not speak merely of himself, but of *us*, all believers, all who love God, all who are called according to his purpose (verse 28). Paul's evident purpose here is to declare the impossibility of any thing whatsoever separating the believer from the love of God. Nothing that can be named or conceived of can do it. We may proceed in our enumeration of things all the way from death to life, the two extremes, and we can find nothing that can do it; no good or hostile angel, no principality, no power, nothing in the past, or present, or future, nothing in the deepest depth, nothing in the highest height, no any thing whatsoever.

V. 39. *Shall be able to separate.* See on verse 35. *From the love of God.* God's love for us; called in verse 35 the love of Christ, or Christ's love for us. The two loves are the same love. As God was incarnated in Christ, so was God's love incarnated in Christ's love. God and Christ are one also in their relation to the believer. He who has Christ on his side has God on his side; and if any one can possibly

conceive that any thing created in the past, or that may be created in the eternities to come, could be more powerful than Christ, nothing that is, or ever will be, can be more powerful than God. Who, then, or what, shall ever be able to separate us from God's love toward us as manifest in Christ?

V.

THE DOCTRINE IN ITS HISTORICAL ASPECTS.

(Another principal objection and the answer.)

CHAPTERS IX.—XI.

Paul having stated and expounded his doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and having established the fact that the natural tendency of the doctrine is to promote holiness, or right living, rather than disregard for the law of God, proceeds in these three chapters to set forth his subject in its historical aspects—that is, in its bearings upon the Jews in their relation to God as his covenant, or elect, people. The Apostle rightly anticipated that the Jew would object to his doctrine of a salvation offered to Gentiles as well as Jews simply as a matter of free grace. That seemed to be placing the outlying Gentile nations on precisely the same plane as the Jewish nation; and this in turn seemed very much like saying that the election of Israel amounted to nothing. What is the use in our being members of the Church if the outsider is, after all, going to stand as well in God's sight as we do? Not only so. The Jew rightly understood Paul's doctrine as implying that the Jew might even be rejected, ceasing to be the Church; and that the Gentiles might be incorporated into the kingdom in Israel's place; or, to use Paul's own figure, that the Gentiles might be grafted into the stock composed of

a few believing Jews, and themselves constitute the Church, or chosen people of God. Paul not only admits the implication, but actually affirms the rejection of Israel. But was not this an infringement of the covenant with Israel, and of the long established doctrine of the divine faithfulness? To the Jew it was, and hence in his estimation it was a formidable objection to Paul's doctrine of salvation. This, then, is the question to which the Apostle in these three chapters addresses himself. In each chapter a distinct phase of the subject is presented.

1. In chap. ix., the true doctrine of the divine Sovereignty, which it is necessary to set forth in order that the Jews might see that God had never forfeited his absolute right to do as might please him in regard to both Jews and Gentiles.

2. In chapter x. he shows that his doctrine by no means implied that God had exercised his absolute sovereignty in a way wrongful to the Jews, but that their rejection was due, in the first place, solely to their abuse of the covenant privileges.

3. In chapter xi. he looks to the future, and tells of the glorious restoration of the Jews, which is to be the outcome of the rejection spoken of in chapter x., and which is to take place at the time of the fullness of the Gentiles.

THE DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.

(Chap. IX.)

Paul treats this subject here only in its historical relations to his doctrine of salvation by grace through faith—that is, only in so far as that doctrine was erroneously supposed by the Jews to affect God's sover-

eign relation to Israel as his chosen people, and to whom he was pledged to be faithful. He argues that this covenant with Israel should not be so understood as to place restrictions upon God's absolute sovereignty and liberty. God had placed no limitation upon himself, forever and inexorably binding himself to save Israel, regardless of Israel's own character and conduct. He quotes from the Jews' own scripture to the effect that God's sovereignty and liberty would not indeed be absolute if he has not the right to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, even though that person be a believing Gentile; and if he has not the right to reject whomsoever he will, be he even an unbelieving and unfaithful Jew.

The Apostle, before proceeding to show that the rejection of the Jews lies not in God, but in their own unfaithfulness expresses the keen grief which the contemplation of the subject awakens with him. To think that his own people and God's own adopted people should be rejected on account of their own unbelief and persistent perversion of the teachings even of their own Scriptures in regard to the true way to be saved, caused him great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart (vs. 1-5). The remainder of the chapter is devoted to the vindication of:

1. God's faithfulness (vs. 6-13).
2. God's absolute power and liberty (vs. 14-21).
3. God's justice and mercy (vs. 22-24).

And then he shows that God's conduct in rejecting the Jews and calling the Gentiles, instead of being a matter to occasion surprise and yet greater hardness, was even foretold in ancient Jewish prophecy (vs. 25-33).

Chap. IX., v. 1:—*I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,*

V. 2:—*That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.*

V. 1. *I say the truth in Christ.* It was possible for the unbelieving Jew to entertain the blasphemous thought that Christ might speak falsehood; but Paul could affirm the truth of any thing in no stronger way than to say it in Christ. He lived and acted in Christ, and in his pure and holy atmosphere no untruth, no exaggeration even, was possible. (Eph. iv. 15, 17.) *I lie not.* This is the negative way of saying what he had affirmed in the first clause—a mode of expression not uncommon in Scripture. (See Isa. xxxviii. 1; John i. 20.) It strengthens the affirmation, for it means that Paul not only told the truth, but that he told it without mixture of falsehood. *My conscience . . . in the Holy Spirit.* His conscience, sanctified and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, bore testimony to Paul that he was telling the truth, and it bore testimony *with* Paul to the Jewish people. Paul was accused by his fellow Jews—the unbelieving part—of being a renegade from the old faith, hostile to his own people, and of exalting the Gentiles at their expense. Hence the strong assertion to the contrary which he here makes.

V. 2. *Great heaviness.* A great grief. *Continual sorrow.* Unceasing pain of heart, caused by Israel's rejection, Israel's attitude toward the gospel. And yet on other accounts Paul "rejoiced always."

V. 3. *I could wish.* The Apostle does not say, "I do wish," for the wish was never really formed in

V. 3:—*For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:*

his heart. His meaning is, I could wish if it were possible to entertain such a wish, or if it were possible for such a wish to be realized. If he had, however, nothing to consult in making such a wish but his burning love for his people, and his desire for his people, it seemed to him that he could make such a wish.

Accursed from Christ. If it were right or possible, or if it would avail in their behalf, I could wish that myself were regarded and treated as anathema—a thing accursed—for the sake of my brethren, the Jews. It is simply a strong way of expressing his longing for the salvation of his people. These words have been interpreted in several other ways by expositors, but I have given what seems to me to be the plainest and most natural view. It is hardly conceivable that Paul meant that “he would consent, if it were possible, to fall back again forever into the state of *condemnation* in which he lived before his conversion, if by the sacrifice of his salvation he could bring about the conversion of his people Israel,” though this is what Godet says Paul did mean. No man has the right to be in such a state of longing as could prompt him to entertain such a wish. A man can say, I could wish to be disgraced in the estimation of all men for the sake of one whom he loves, or I could wish to lay down my very life, if it would do any good; but no Christian can say, under any circumstances, I could wish to be God’s eternal enemy, and have him as my eternal enemy.

V. 4:—*Who are Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ;*

V. 5:—*Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*

V. 4. **Who are Israelites.** That is, my kinsmen, who are Israelites *to whom pertaineth*, etc. To whom belongs the high honor of being God's adopted people. Israel was called God's first-born son. God had entered into formal covenant relation with the Israelitish people at Sinai, as he had done before with the patriarchs and afterward with David, and they had received from him many tokens of his visible presence or glory, and the written law, and an elaborate tabernacle and temple service, and many promises concerning Christ and his kingdom. No other nation had been so highly favored.

V. 5. **Whose are the fathers.** In particular, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; the great heroes of Israelitish history may be included, as Moses, Joshua, David, etc. To have such an ancestry was a matter of greatest national pride. **And of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.** Paul does not say whose, or to whom, is Christ as he had said "Whose are the fathers." The fathers were the property, so to speak, of the Jews alone, but Christ, while he came of the Jews, in respect to the flesh belonged alike to all men. He is over all ; he is God ; he is blessed forever. Paul undoubtedly means to affirm here the supreme deity of Christ, notwithstanding the fact that as to the flesh he was born a Jew. This was the greatest of the honors conferred upon the Jews—and

V. 6:—*Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:*

yet they were unbelieving and would be rejected as a people! It only makes Paul's grief the greater.

It is proper to say that several other interpretations of this verse have been advocated by different scholars, all of which, however, are founded upon a punctuation of the Greek text different from that indicated in our Authorized and Revised English Versions, and also different from that of the principal printed Greek editions. Some would place a period after *came*, and make the following part of the verse read: "May God, who is over all, be blessed forever." Others would place the period after *all*, and read: "May God be blessed forever." It is sufficient to say here that the vast majority both of ancient and modern authorities favor the punctuation as it stands in the received text; nor is there any thing in the text as it stands that is contrary to Pauline usage or teaching. Even Socinus, the father of Unitarianism, admits that the words of the clause are meant by Paul to be applied to Christ, though, in this case they plainly teach the doctrine of his divine Majesty.

V. 6. *Not as though*, etc. Paul means to say that although he is thus greatly grieved at heart on account of the imminent rejection of his brethren the Jews, he does not wish to be understood as implying thereby that "the word of God hath taken none effect;" or, in other words, that God would not fulfill his promise to Israel. On the contrary the promise would be fully realized. Paul proceeds in the following words to show how Israel may be rejected as God's

V. 7:—*Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

V. 8:—*That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*

chosen people, and yet God be true to the promises made to Israel. ***For they are not all Israel which are of Israel.*** This was the solution of the matter. The Jew was misapprehending the true and profounder meaning of "Israel." When God made a promise to Israel he meant Israel in the true sense. By fleshly descent they might be members of the Israelitish nation and yet not be members of the holy remnant to whom alone the promises were really made. See Jer. xxiii. 3; Amos v. 15, and various other passages.

V. 7. ***Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham.*** To be "the seed of Abraham" is the same as to be "of Israel;" and to be the "children" of Abraham is the same as to be "Israel." They alone are *children* of Abraham who are like Abraham in respect to his most distinguishing characteristic—faith. Paul illustrates by reference to Isaac and Ishmael, both of whom were the seed of Abraham, and yet evidently these two did not stand in the same relation either to God or to Abraham as the father of the faithful, or the true seed. As it is evident, therefore, that all who are "of Abraham" are not Abraham's, so is it true that all who are "of Israel" are not Israel.

V. 8. ***That is, they which are the children of the flesh.*** This verse is explanatory of the preceding. Ishmael was the seed of Abraham by nature

merely. Isaac was his seed by miracle and faith. If Abraham had been without faith there would have been no miracle and hence no Isaac. If God then based his choice or election of a people on faith in the first place, so is this faith ever necessary as an actual characteristic of those who would be regarded as God's children. If any of the Jews have it not they are not God's children; if any of the Gentiles have it, they are. He can not be a child of Abraham, or of God, who lacks that very characteristic which constitutes one a child. If God had the sovereign right then, in the first place, not to choose or elect Ishmael's descendants as his peculiar people, so has he the same sovereign right now to reject those who are Israelites merely according to the flesh. And as faith in the promise was the basis of his choice of Abraham's descendants through Isaac, so may faith be the basis of his call of the Gentiles. It is not in any case "Abraham's fatherhood that determines the true seed, but that promise which was the expression of God's free electing grace."

Are counted for the seed. Of course there were qualities in Ishmael and Isaac, and their descendants respectively, which rendered the one more available or suitable than the other as the constituted people of God, and these qualities, summed up in the word faith, must have constituted the basis of the divine choice, or election. But the particular side of the truth which Paul wishes here to emphasize is that, whichever one became the "seed" in the true sense, became so only because and only in so far as God chose to "count" him so; for he had the sovereign right to choose neither.

V. 9:—*For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.*

V. 10:—*And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac,*

V. 11:—*(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*

V. 12:—*It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*

V. 13:—*As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

V. 9. *For this is the word of promise.* Here follows the Old Testament proof of the statement in the preceding verse, as if he had written: I said, children of the promise are counted the seed, and I rightly used the words ‘children of the promise,’ for this is a word of promise simply, implying no right whatever on Abraham’s, or Isaac’s, or any human being’s, part, to wit, “About this time next year I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.” Gen. xviii. 10–14.

V. 10–13. *And not only this.* Why does the Apostle adduce yet further proof? Perhaps because he anticipated that the Jew might say that the proof drawn from the case of Ishmael and Isaac was not conclusive, as they were the children of two different mothers, only one of whom was the real wife. But here the mother of the two children is one and the same woman, and they are also twins, Rebecca having conceived *by one*, to wit, Isaac; and more than that still, the election of Jacob and the rejection of Esau, was indicated to Rebecca even before the children were born, when of course neither one had done any thing to influence the divine choice. The circum-

stances of these two are therefore as nearly identical as possible. Why then did God choose the one and not the other, and that one, too, the younger? Whatever may be truly said of God's foresight of certain moral qualities on Jacob's part and the absence of them on Esau's part, Paul does not here direct attention to them; he wishes the Jew simply to understand that God did as he did merely as one who has the sovereign right to do as he pleases. God has a plan before him; both of the two sons were not needed; and hence in this sense he could not choose both. In choosing Jacob his sovereignty was under no restraint; he was bound by no extraneous obligations arising from Jacob's *merits*; he did it in the exercise of his absolute liberty. This is what Paul wishes the Jew to recognize; and if he only would recognize it, if he would only see that God had never in any way forfeited his unlimited right to do as he pleases, then the Jew could no longer accuse God of faithlessness if he should reject him. The qualities, whether moral or other kinds, which God surely did foresee in Jacob did determine the *direction* of the divine choice, for God does not choose recklessly, regardlessly, irrationally (if we may so speak). But no foreseen qualities on Jacob's part *originated* the divine choice, and they were not a meritorious ground of it; for in this case also we may say that his moral integrity would have remained intact had he chose neither. What he did he did in the exercise of his sovereign liberty, and no one should dare call him to account for it.

V. 12. *It was said unto her.* Gen. xxv. 23. Esau shall serve Jacob. That is, the people descended from Esau, the Edomites, were always inferior to the Israel-

V. 14:—*What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*

V. 15:—*For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*

V. 16:—*So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

V. 17:—*For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

V. 18:—*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

ites or descendants of Jacob, and were actually reduced to servitude by the latter. 1 Chron. xviii. 13; 2 Chron. xxi. 8. B.

V. 13. *As it is written.* Malachi, i. 2, 3. Both Paul and the prophet simply mean by these words that God chose Jacob and his descendants to be his *officially*, his Church, his people, the depository of his revelation and Messianic promises, and that in this capacity he rejected Esau. They do not mean that God positively hated Esau, nor do they have any reference whatever to the eternal salvation of either. Whatever the *word* here translated *hated* may mean, it is not here used in the sense in which we ordinarily use the word *to hate* nor in the sense in which the Greeks ordinarily used the word *misein*, and the Hebrews the corresponding word *sano'*. All peoples use most words in a more or less figurative sense, and such is doubtless the case here, the word *to hate* being employed to denote that God, for reasons which he does not state, had a strong preference for Jacob over Esau so far as acting in any official or theocratic capacity

V. 19:—*Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?*

V. 20:—*Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?*

V. 21:—*Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?*

V. 22:—*What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:*

V. 23:—*And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,*

V. 24:—*Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?*

was concerned. God chooses, or elects, David to be king, but he loves the souls of David's brothers or of his friend Jonathan none the less. God elected Paul to be the great apostle to the Gentiles and the writer of a great part of the New Testament, but this does not imply any antipathy on God's part toward Barnabas or Silas, individually. The prophets were divinely inspired men but they employed the language to which the warm tempered Orientals were accustomed, and hence they often use stronger figures than we cooler tempered Occidental people would use. That our Savior should say, "he that *hateth* not his father and mother is not worthy of me," did not sound strangely to those to whom he was speaking, nor would it sound so to us if we would understand the word in the sense in which they understood it and in which they used it.

V. 19-24. The question which Paul proceeds to an-

swer in these verses is this : He had affirmed God's absolute sovereignty—his perfect liberty in executing his plan for the world's redemption to elect or reject whomsoever he would as an official factor in that plan ; what he had said and done to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the whole of Israel, being a matter of mere voluntary and conditional promise on his part. The question, then, is, Is not the present exercise of this absolute liberty in the rejection of the Jews an act of injustice on the part of God ? The answer which Paul makes to the question is not a philosophical one, but scriptural. It is based solely on the Old Testament Scriptures, the authority of which no Jew could be supposed to doubt.

V. 14. *What shall we say then ?* Paul's usual mode of introducing the Jew's objection to his doctrine. See iv. 1 ; vi. 1 ; vii. 7 ; viii. 31.

Is there unrighteousness with God ? Is God unjust ? All that the Jew knew was the law ; this was the beginning and the end of his ethical training ; his conscience had been developed under the law ; he had no conscience apart from his relation to the law ; he supposed the conduct of God toward man to be regulated exclusively by man's works, by his merits or demerits, by his outward attitude toward the Law. If God then rejects the Jews independently of any consideration of their attitude toward the Law, is he not unjust ?

God forbid. By no means ; let no one think so for a moment. Paul then appeals to the Jews' own Scripture. The argumentative force of these quotations may be briefly exhibited as follows :

1. Your own Scriptures affirm of God the same sov-

ereign action independently of any merit or demerit on man's part as its basis.

2. You can not believe that your own Scriptures teach that God is unjust in so acting.

3. Therefore you can not believe that I teach it.

V. 15. **He saith to Moses.** This passage is quoted from Ex. xxxiii. 19. ***I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.*** That is, on whomsoever I please. Paul adds in verse 18, "And whom he will he hardeneth." The words teach the absolute freedom of the divine action in choosing one and rejecting another. The *ground* or *basis* of this divine action lies wholly in the will or nature of God, and not in the *merit* or *demerit* of the man. If it lay in the man's merit, then God would be placed under compulsion. A man's character or conduct may have a determining influence on the *direction* of the divine action, but not in *originating* it. God's "hardening" proceeds from God's nature, just as his having mercy proceeds from the same source. Essentially the same familiar distinction between *determining the direction of God's action*, and *originating or being the ground of his action*, is made when we say that a man's faith is the "instrumental cause" of his salvation but not the ground, or meritorious or moving cause of it. And it is this last thought, to wit, the *ground* or *originating cause*, which Paul wishes here to emphasize. Why? Because the Jews had utterly neglected, and placed the whole emphasis of their thoughts on their outward attitude toward the law, regarding this not only as the ground, but as the sole ground, on which God bestows his favors. Hence, we see that the passages which Paul here quotes from the Old Testament were

by no means meant to teach that God is arbitrary in his bestowments, and that he is just as likely to choose one man as another to be a vessel of wrath or of mercy. They simply teach that God's action is absolutely free, and in no case under the compulsion of any influence or force outside of himself, and that hence he is responsible to no one whatsoever for what he does or does not.

V. 16. *So then*, etc. The ground, or originating cause, of God's conduct to man is himself alone, and not outside of himself; it is not in the will of any man, but in his own. Many may run in a race, but God gives the prize to whomsoever he pleases. 1 Cor. ix. 24-26.

V. 17. *For the Scripture saith*. See Ex. ix. 16. These words are quoted as an example of how, or in what sense, God hardens. Do the words mean that God aroused or excited Pharaoh to resist the Israelites? Yes, say Augustine, DeWette, Reuss, and others. Meyer's words are: "Thy whole historical appearance has been brought about by me in order that I might show my power in thee." So in substance Beza, Calvin, Bengel. Hodge says that "Pharaoh was no worse than many other men who have obtained mercy; yet God for wise and benevolent reasons withheld from him the saving influences of his grace, and gave him up to his own wicked heart, so that he became more and more hardened until he was finally destroyed. God did nothing to Pharaoh beyond his strict deserts; he did not make him wicked; he only forebore to make him good, by the exertion of special and unmerited grace." Macknight, who belonged to

the same school of interpreters with Calvin, thinks that by "Pharaoh" God meant not Pharaoh individually, but Pharaoh as representing the kingdom over which he ruled, or Pharaoh in his official capacity.

Various other shades of opinion have been held in regard to the meaning of the words. One thing may be regarded as certain: They do *not* teach that God made Pharaoh wicked, nor do they teach that by any sort of influence on Pharaoh's heart God impelled him to evil. Pharaoh never did manifest the slightest inclination to justice and righteousness. His only momentary relenting was caused by fear, and if under the influence of this fear he had let the Israelites go away he would still have been a wicked man. He was hardened against his fear. He would have been a wicked man even had he never been king or stood in any relation to the Israelites. Had God raised up a good man to be king, one who would have permitted the Israelites to go away unmolested, there never could have been the great display of divine power in Israel's behalf at the Red Sea passage. But as such a display of power would be of immense advantage to Israel, instead of raising up a good man to be king at this time, God chose to exalt to this dignity one who was wicked and relentless. If a man will be wicked and relentless anyway, and an occasion arises in which by exalting such a man, God can make a great use of him, has he not the sovereign right to do so? May not God even cause the proud heart of such a man to be hardened against all fear? For what good would it do such a man to relent from mere fright? He would be as wicked at heart as he was before. No one has any right whatever to call in question God's sovereign right to choose as his instrument any one

whom it may please him to choose, even though that chosen instrument be a very bad man. And this is all that Paul means to teach by this quotation. It has no bearing at all on the question as to how Pharaoh originally came to be wicked; nor does it follow in the remotest degree that a sovereign who "suspends" the *exercise* of his sovereignty on conditions which depend upon the acts or character of others is no sovereign. It only implies that the sovereign God is a rational sovereign; one with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, but who always acts in accordance with principles fixed eternally in his own nature.

V. 18. *Therefore.* Introducing the general conclusion from verses 15, 16, 17. This verse has been sufficiently explained in the notes on the three preceding verses, which see.

V. 19. *Thou wilt say.* The Jewish objector is here represented as asking, Suppose we grant that God has the right to harden us, what right then has he to find fault with us? His will was to harden us, and we are hardened, and so we have not resisted his will: what right then has he to blame and punish us for being what he himself has made us?

V. 20. *Nay, but O man.* The question of the Jew implies a disposition on his part to keep up a debate with God, whereas he should have been satisfied with the statement already made of God's sovereign and indisputable right, taking men as he found them, to use them as he pleased. Paul's reply, therefore, is of the nature of a rebuke to this spirit of the Jew

which persists in calling God to account for his doings. The answer, couched in the language of the Old Testament prophet (Isa. xlv. 9; lxiv. 8) is one that becomes a sovereign. The *Nay, but O man*, etc., has in it a touch of irony; *man* on the one hand, *God* on the other, and yet the former daring to call to account the latter!

But the answer is not merely a rebuke; for it should be observed that "the thing formed"—that is, "the clay"—does not say to the potter: Why didst thou create me a bad quality of clay, out of which only a vessel of dishonor could be molded? The potter had not created the clay bad to begin with, and neither the prophet nor the Apostle had said that he had. Paul therefore replies by asking a question shaped in view of the fact as he stated it; Shall the clay say to the potter, Why hast thou formed me into a vessel of dishonor? The question obviously admitted of two answers, depending entirely upon the point of view: 1. Because thou art bad clay, and not suitable for any other kind of vessel. But this answer would have had no bearing upon the aspect of the subject which Paul was discussing. 2. Because it is my sovereign pleasure so to do. Now it was God's absolute right to make such use, or disposition, of such human material as he had, as in his sovereign pleasure he saw fit, that Paul is seeking to establish. He does not once raise the question as to how the human material became good or bad in the first place; but *being* good or bad, he in the exercise of his absolute liberty determines what he will do with it. Nor is it a valid objection to this view of these verses to say that it is the same lump of clay that is made into vessels of honor and dishonor. Both vessels were made of *clay*, that is true; but Paul

does not mean that both were made of identically the same particles of clay; nor does he say any thing about a difference of quality in the two parts of the same lump which were formed into the two vessels respectively—and for the obvious reason, as we have seen, that he was not discussing that aspect of the subject. Pharaoh and Moses were both human material; one was good material, the other was bad; such as they were God used them as he pleased, and he used both wisely and in perfect harmony with the eternal principles of his own nature. And in like manner will he use the Jews and the Gentiles.

Paul nowhere raises the question of the metaphysical origin of sin in human character; he nowhere asks how did any given human material, as Pharaoh or Moses, come to be good or bad material. And his only contention here is, not to make or create material of such and such quality, but, finding it good or bad, to use it as he will.

V. 22-27. In the preceding verses Paul vindicated God's absolute right to use good and bad men in whatever way might be pleasing to him. In these verses he shows that although God has this absolute right, his actual exercise of it had not been such as could be called unduly rigorous even by the Jews. The reader in applying these words may easily pass from the Jews, with whom Paul is reasoning, to the case of any sinner. God exercises great long-suffering toward all sinners, whom he has the unquestionable right, however, to cut off at any moment, for they are vessels of wrath suited for destruction.

V. 22. *What if God*, etc. It is necessary for the

reader to observe that the sentence, which ends with the close of verse 24, is really incomplete. The idea is this. But (or now) if God, although willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the obstinacy and disobedience of the wicked men who were so worthy of destruction, would you, in this case make any further charge against his justice? And if you were told that he had thus borne with these vessels of wrath in order that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, would you make any further objection against his justice?

The vessels of wrath. Simply "vessels of wrath;" Pharaoh, the rebellious people of Israel, impenitent sinners generally.

Fitted for destruction. Observe that Paul neither says nor intimates by whom they were fitted. That question did not concern his argument, and hence he does not raise it. Obviously, however, the human vessel's own perverse will, obstinately resisting God's judgments and mercies, fits him, or more and more makes him the prepared object of destructive wrath.

Vessels of mercy. The opposite of vessels of wrath; Moses, for example, the remnant of Jews who continued faithful to Jehovah, any penitent and believing sinners.

Which he had afore prepared unto glory. Not the final glorification of ch. viii. 30; but the glorious manifestations of divine love which God makes to the vessels of mercy—his Church; and while the Apostle does not say nor intimate that it is God who fits the vessels of wrath for destruction, he explicitly

says that it is God who prepares the vessels of mercy. He prepares them by his grace and various providences. Hence there is no thought of desert or merit on the part of these vessels of mercy, whereas the word "fitted" does, as we have seen, imply desert on the part of the vessels of wrath. The one experiences "destruction" on account of his merits, the other glorification in spite of his demerits.

V. 24. *Even us.* This verse defines who are meant by the vessels of mercy of the preceding verse; *us*, to wit, those whom he hath called, whether Jewish believers or Gentile. The call of which the Apostle speaks is presented as subsequent to the preparation spoken of in verse 23. I can see no ground, however, for the view that Paul here in speaking of a previous preparation refers even remotely to the foreknowledge and predestination of ch. viii. 29. The kingdom was prepared for the believer from the foundation of the world (Matt. xxv. 34); but Paul does not mean here that the believer was in the divine purpose prepared for the kingdom from the foundation of the world, although this as a matter of fact is true. What he refers to here is an historical preparation, one that occurs in time and which consists in divine providences, instruction—whatever, in short, directs and influences the mind toward that destination which God has in view for him whom he is preparing. And God never calls one who has had no previous preparation therefor. The preparation enables him to understand the language or import of the call. God does not call Jew or Gentile from his old faith or his no faith into Christianity without a previous course of preparation which enables them to apprehend and appreciate the

V. 25:—*As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.*

V. 26:—*And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.*

V. 27:—*Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:*

V. 28:—*For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*

V. 29:—*And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrah.*

call; and this preparation continued onward becomes also a preparation for glorification. They are prepared, and then they are called out, and then they constitute his Church, or *ecclesia*.

Vs. 25-29. In these five verses Paul quotes the testimony of Old Testament prophecy in regard to the call of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews. The Jews must have been, of course, well acquainted with these sayings of their ancient prophets, but as was true in regard to many other parts of the Old Testament, they had read them only through the colored lens of their national prejudice and self-righteous pride. Paul quotes them according to their true significance.

Vs. 25, 26. *Osee*. The Greek mode of spelling Hosea; see Hos. ii. 23. Although the words here quoted were originally addressed to apostate Israel, the inspired Apostle applies the principle which they

involve to the Gentiles. This principle is that while Israel was in this condition of alienation, or of *not being God's people*, they were practically the same as Gentiles; they stood on precisely the same level in God's sight, so that whatever might be said to Israel while in this state of absolute divorcement from Jehovah might just as truly be said to the Gentiles. Hence, the *not my people*, or *the not beloved*, are regarded by Paul as Gentiles. The words, therefore, easily mean that the Church shall be enlarged and extended by bringing within its pale a hitherto outlying and unrecognized material.

V. 27. *Esaias*. The Greek mode of spelling Isaiah; see Isa. x. 22, 23. In these words Paul "passes over from prophecies applicable to the calling of the Gentiles to others concerning the exclusion of all but a believing remnant of the Jews." (Gifford.) The word "remnant" has the definite article in the Greek. The meaning is, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sands of the sea, only the small part of them—the holy or believing remnant—shall be saved; the rest shall be rejected. The words *shall be saved* do not refer primarily to the eternal destiny of individual Israelites, but to the destiny of the great mass of the Israelitish people in respect to their covenant relation with Jehovah; they shall be rejected; they shall no longer constitute his Church.

V. 28. *For*. The reason is here assigned why only the faithful remnant shall be saved, "For the Lord will execute his word upon the earth, finishing and cutting it short," and he will do it righteously, inflict-

V. 30:—*What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*

V. 31:—*But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.*

V. 32:—*Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at the stumblingstone;*

V. 33:—*As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and a rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

ing injustice on no one. But he would be unjust if he did not do it.

V. 29. *As Esaias (Isaiah) said before.* See Isa. i. 9. *The Lord of Sabaoth.* The Lord of hosts. The word *seed* here denotes the same persons as *the remnant* in verse 27, but it is a different word in the Greek and also in the original of Isaiah. The prophet used the word *saridh*, which denotes, not merely a small part, but a remnant which has escaped slaughter or destruction. The Apostle looks upon this *saridh*, or these few survivors, as a *sperma*, or *seed*, from which shall spring up another multitude. Hence, the word "seed" is suggestive of the glorious future which awaits the Church, composed though it was of only a few who had escaped rejection and destruction. In the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah none escaped destruction, and the cities of the plain never sprung up again from their desolation.

Vs. 30-33. In these verses Paul states the true conclusion and explanation of the whole matter: If Israel's rejection is not due to the faithlessness or

injustice of God to what shall we say, then, it is due? It is due to this: It is due to Israel's own fault. The Jews have not attained to righteousness in God's sight because, although they followed or sought after righteousness, it was only a self-righteousness, a righteousness which related only to outward works of the law, and which based its claims upon God only on personal merit. Paul prefaces this summary statement of the true explanation of the matter with a hasty reference to the Gentiles who, on the contrary, had attained to righteousness, though they sought it not (as the Jews had done). The latter missed what they sought, the former obtained what they sought not—"the most poignant irony," Godet calls it, "in the whole of history."

V. 30. *Which followed not after righteousness.* The righteousness necessary to salvation; the Gentiles had not made a study and special pursuit of righteousness in the sense of justification as the Jews had. *Have attained to righteousness.* Because hearing the gospel, and having no false pride or prejudices against the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, they readily accepted it.

V. 31. *But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness.* The Jews made it a matter of special effort and pride to attain to righteousness before God solely by a formal obedience of the law. The Jew failed; the Gentile did not.

V. 32. *Wherefore?* Why did the Jews fail? In verse 31 Paul states the fact simply. In this verse he states the reason. It was because they sought right-

eousness, not by faith, but by works, as if righteousness could be attained in that way; and the further fact that they were so prejudiced in favor of this way of seeking righteousness, so blinded, as to cause them to stumble over Him who is called the stone of stumbling—"the very Messiah whom they had so long invoked in all their prayers"—the very Messiah whom even their own prophet had foretold as one over whom they would stumble.

V. 33. *As it is written.* See Isa. viii. 14; xxvii. 16. See also the same application to Christ in Luke ii. 34; xx. 17, 18; 1 Peter ii. 4-8. ***Stumblingstone.*** He who strikes against or opposes the Christ breaks himself and not this Stone. ***Rock of offence.*** Rock of falling. The Jews stumbled against or struck the Stone, and fell, and hence it was not only a stone of stumbling, but also one of offence or falling. ***Shall not be ashamed.*** Shall not fail to obtain the salvation which Christ brings.

Was it quite just in Paul to thus charge the Jews with want of faith? Had they not sought righteousness in the only way they knew? In answer, it is only necessary to say that it required no divinely inspired reader of the Jewish Scriptures to see that the way of salvation as made known in the Old Testament was in all essential respects precisely the same as the way which Paul had expounded in his preaching, and was now expounding in this epistle. They might have known this as well as Paul and the other Jewish apostles, for these apostles were no more inspired previous to their conversion to Christianity than were the other Jews. Hence, the Jews were without excuse. And hence, although Paul has so

strenuously advocated the absolute sovereignty of Jehovah in this chapter, particularly in verses 15-21, this can by no means be so construed as to teach that man is only a passive and irresponsible instrument in God's hands; for we see that in these last verses (30-33) the very point which Paul wishes to make is that all might have been well with these rejected Jews had it not been for *themselves*. They were the party on whom all the blame must rest. If this is not true his words are utterly devoid of meaning. The sin of the Jews was the want of what Paul calls faith, and for this lack of faith they themselves were responsible. If they were not, these apparently most serious words of the Apostle are nothing but idle vapping.

ISRAEL'S UNBELIEF; THE GENTILES' BELIEF.

(Chap. X.)

Or the rejection of Israel and the calling of the Gentiles explained, not in its relation to God's sovereignty, but in its relation to the faith and want of faith on the part of the Gentiles and Israelites respectively. There is no fatalistic decree. The gospel is intended equally for all; for salvation in its very nature depends, on its human side, not on outward condition or circumstance, but on the faith, the character, the inward attitude, the condition of heart, of him to whom it is offered. Hence, in the very nature of the case, it is to be preached alike to Gentiles and Jews—a fact to which, even the Jews' greatest prophets plainly testify. The Church, having itself learned the truth, must be either a missionary Church, or cease to be the Church.

Chap. X., V. 1 :—*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.*

In this chapter Paul presents more fully the explanation of the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles already briefly stated, ix. 30-33. The chapter may be divided into three principal sections—

1. Vs. 1-12. Salvation conditioned on the "righteousness of God," and not on self-righteousness. Hence,

2. Vs. 13-18. Jews and Gentiles have equal claims to it, and it should be preached alike to all.

3. Vs. 19-21. The attitude of Jews and Gentiles respectively toward the gospel, predicted by Old Testament prophets.

V. 1. **Brethren.** Read what Paul had just said of the Jews in verses 30-33 of last chapter. He here enters more at length upon the cause of their fall, but again prefaces what he has to say on this painful subject with an expression of his earnest longing for their salvation. He calls them his "brethren," reminding them that he still regarded himself as a true Jew, and not as one who had become alienated from them, and as one addressing them coldly and from afar off. As was his custom, he tempers rebuke with tenderness. His language throughout plainly shows that rejection of the Jews, neither as individuals nor as a people, was not due to an irrevocable divine decree, and he does not write in this chapter as if he thought that any thing which he said in chapter ix. might be so construed by them as to cause them to think that they were to any extent irresponsible in the matter.

V. 2:—*For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*

V. 3:—*For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*

Heart's desire. This "heart's desire" of Paul might be addressed to either God or man, but being addressed to God it becomes a "prayer." ***Might be saved.*** Might as individuals and as a people accept Christ as the Messiah and the plan of salvation presented by Paul in this epistle.

V. 2. ***I bear them record,*** or witness. Paul, before his conversion, had had an intense zeal of the same kind. See Acts xxii. 3. ***Not according to knowledge.*** The Jews were a very religious people, but blinded by ignorance and prejudice; thus blinded, they manifested their religious zeal in opposing the gospel and in persecuting the Christians. But religious zeal is in itself a good quality, and it is characteristic of Paul not to overlook whatever is praiseworthy in those with whom he is obliged to be at issue on other points.

V. 3. ***For they being ignorant,*** etc. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, they went about to establish their own righteousness, and in doing this they also opposed God's righteousness; and hence the zeal which they did have was not according to knowledge. Ignorant zeal is generally accompanied by prejudice and self-conceit, and hence with whatever of good it may work it also works evil. But this "ignorance" on the part of the Jews was in itself a criminal ignorance for a careful study of their

V. 4:—*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

own Scriptures would have informed them that what is here called God's righteousness was the only kind that is acceptable to God.

God's righteousness. The same as that mentioned in chapter iii. 24-26 and iv. 5. **Their own righteousness.** The *righteousness* which consisted in their strict observance of the law, and which they thought rendered them acceptable to God. See Phil. iii. 9.

V. 4. *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* That is, where faith in Christ begins there dependence upon the law as a means of salvation ceases. There are always two systems or plans of salvation—a faith system and a law system. The Jews, like all sinners, preferred the law system. Christ, or the faith system, is never the one accepted, only as a last resort. The law first; Christ afterward, the law having failed. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," is the song of the soul only after it has found every thing else worthless. Christ is never found at the outset because it is not he who is sought. But he who finds Christ, or accepts Christ, or has faith in him, does as a matter of fact, in so doing, meet all the requirements of the law in so far as attaining to a righteousness which is valid with God is concerned. The fact that the Jews did not recognize the truth of what Paul here says, but on the contrary endeavored to establish their own righteousness by a strict obedience particularly to the

V. 5:—*For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.*

V. 6:—*But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)*

V. 7:—*Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)*

ceremonial law, is a proof that their “zeal for God” was not “according to knowledge.”

This verse therefore does not mean, 1st, That whereas the Mosaic legal system was once the true means of salvation, Christ now is the true means; for the observance of the Mosaic system had never been the true means of salvation in any sense different from what the Lord's-supper, or the rite of baptism, now is. Nor does it mean, 2d, That Christ is the *aim* of the law, in the sense of being the destination to which the law would lead the sinner—though this is the meaning of Gal. iii. 23-25. Nor does it mean, 3d, That Christ is the completion or fulfillment of the law, either in the sense of being the One to whom the whole Mosaic system looked, or in the sense that the law exhausted all its demands upon Christ and therefore can not any longer make any demands upon me. But it does mean that the acceptance of Christ by the believer puts an end to all his legalistic works, or efforts to obtain salvation.

Vs. 5, 6, 7. In these verses we have a comparison of the righteousness which is of the law and Christ or the righteousness which is of faith (the righteousness of God). The latter puts an end to the former. But we should bear in mind that Paul here speaks of

the legal righteousness in the sense in which the Pharisees and other Jews in his day understood it; in the sense in which he himself understood it before his conversion. It was a righteousness which consisted merely in outward obedience to legal requirements, unaccompanied by any recognition of divine grace, or by any real penitence or contrition of spirit, and which claimed the divine favor on the ground simply of personal merit.

It was the righteousness which is of the law, but not this Pharisaical conception of it, which Moses had described (Lev. xviii. 5) when he said that "the man which doeth those things [which the law commands] shall live." (Lev. xviii. 5.) Ezekiel and other prophets had also spoken in like manner. (Ezek. xx. 11, 13, 21; Neh. ix. 13-29.) Paul himself had insisted upon the same truth in the first part of this epistle; chapter ii. 6-13.

The legal righteousness in the Pharisaical sense was indeed worthless and offensive in God's sight; but the legal righteousness in the sense of Moses and the prophets was not, because it implied a humble and contrite spirit, a recognition of the divine grace and of constant dependence upon God's Spirit. (Psalms li. 10, 11.) He who thus lived always had been and always would be justified in God's sight; and it was not this conception of justification which Paul was seeking to displace from the Jewish mind. He was seeking to remove that erroneous Pharisaical conception above mentioned, which rendered the law a burden which no man could bear, and which made righteousness a thing far beyond the attainment of any man; and this Pharisaical conception of righteousness was the prevalent one among the Jews.

V. 8:—*But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;*

But Christ, who is God's righteousness, is not an impracticability; he is not unattainable; he is not far away; no one has to ascend into heaven or descend into the deep in order to find him; he is near at hand; it is easy to be saved through Christ. Paul himself had experienced both the hard failure of the Pharisaical legal process and the easy reality of Christ, the righteousness of God.

V. 6. *The righteousness which is of faith speaketh.* This righteousness is here personified and represented as speaking. The words are quoted from Deut. xxx. 12-14. The very essence of the righteousness of faith is in him who loves God and turns to him with all his heart and soul. Deut. xxx. 6-10. He who thus loves and turns to God abandons self and all self-righteous claims; and though he may not know the historical Christ or his relation to the salvation of sinners, yet his heart is not such as would reject him. He has in him indeed this righteousness of God without knowing him by his historical name of Christ.

V. 8. *The word is nigh thee.* Notwithstanding the nearness, the easy practicability of the true Mosaic idea of the righteousness which is pleasing to God, the Jews in perverting it had made it a thing afar off. The Mosaic word was the same in its essence as "the word of faith" which Paul preached, and which constitutes the doctrinal substance of this Epistle to the Romans.

V. 9:—*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

V. 9. *That if thou shalt confess*, etc. The language of this verse is the translation into the language of the New Testament of the way of salvation as described by Moses in Deuteronomy. In both there is to be a *confession*, an outward expression, or *doing*; and in both this outward confession or doing must proceed from a corresponding inward condition or state of heart or *character*; in both Christ was present, though in the Mosaic time he was known as Jehovah, and in the New Testament as the Lord Jesus. In both *he* was the Savior; in both the inward condition of heart is the same, though called in the one the resurrection unto newness of life and the other the circumcision of heart. Deut. xxx. 6.

Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus. Or, as the Revised Version has it, *confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord.* In either case Jesus can not be one's actual Savior unless he be also recognized as one's Lord; but this confession *with* the mouth amounts to nothing, of course, unless it be the confession *of* the heart—that is, of *ourselves*. As it was supremely essential under the Mosaic and Old Testament dispensation to acknowledge Jehovah as God, and as the true God and only God, so is it essential for the same reason under the New Testament dispensation to acknowledge Jesus as Lord. The latter is only the New Testament aspect of the same truth.

Believe in thine heart. To believe in the heart is to so believe any thing as to cause the belief to be the supreme motive power of our lives. One may

believe a thing and yet his life, *himself*, be in no way affected by the belief; but not so if he believes it "in his heart."

That God hath raised him from the dead.

Why did not Paul say that we must believe that Jesus died for us, or for our sins? Was it because this is not a necessary belief? No, of course not. So far as Paul teaches any thing on the subject, the life and death of Jesus on earth might have been of infinite value in God's sight, even though his human body had never been raised from the dead. But neither Jew nor any other man could have deemed his life or death of any divine value unless he believed in the first place that God did actually raise him from the dead. As a man may really be the authorized representative of his government at a foreign court, and yet have no credentials in his possession as proof of the fact; so Jesus would really have been all that he actually was and still is even though his human body had never been raised as it was from the dead. But neither Jew nor Gentile would ever have believed it, and hence they never would have acknowledged him as their divine Lord; and hence they never would have accepted his teachings as authoritative; and hence, again, they never would have accepted him as Savior; and hence, again, he and all that he had said and done, would soon have passed out of the memory of men, and the "righteousness which is of faith" would have been no more accessible to man than it had been at any time before Jesus was born, and "life and immortality" would have been just as much in the dark. But to believe with the heart that God had raised him from the dead implied the belief of every thing else concerning him that was essential.

V. 10:—*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

V. 11:—*For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

V. 10. *For with the heart*, etc. This is the reason or ground of the statement in verse 9 that he who thus believed and confessed should be saved. To believe “unto righteousness” was to have such faith as constituted one righteous in God’s sight, though it did not make him sinless. ***Confession is made unto salvation.*** Salvation in this verse differs from righteousness or justification in that it comprehends also perseverance in the Christian life and the final glorification. To “confess unto salvation” is to publicly acknowledge Christ as our divine Lord and Savior. The importance of doing this is often urged in the Scriptures. Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 8; 1 John iv. 15; Psalm li. 14, 15. To avow one’s faith strengthens one in his faith, and places all his influence on the side of Christ. The confession should be continuous, day by day, and not spasmodic or merely occasional, and Paul’s statement here implies that it is a continuous confession.

V. 11. *For the Scripture saith.* This quotation from the Old Testament, from which Paul so often quotes, is the proof that the faith and confession of verse 10 proceed onward unto salvation. See Isaiah xxviii. 16. ***Shall not be ashamed.*** Disappointed. But this quotation is not a proof merely of the certainty of the righteousness and final salvation of those who have this faith; it is a proof also of its universality; it belongs to all who believe.

V. 12:—*For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

V. 12. *For there is no difference.* Paul's attention also fell upon the word *whosoever*. Why "whosoever?" Because there is no difference, so far as the offer of this salvation is concerned, between men; it is provided for all alike; all men have the same Lord, whether they be Jews or heathens, or whatever their condition, and he would as willingly bestow his spiritual gifts upon one as upon another. All that any one has to do is to call upon him. To all such he is rich in his bestowments. He who is here called Lord of all is Christ. See Romans xiv. 9; Phil. ii. 11; Acts x. 36. In chapter iii. 30 the doctrine of the universal offer of salvation was proved on the ground that the God of one man is the God of all men. Here it is the same Christ or Lord. As there are not two Gods and two Christs or Lords, so there are not two modes of dealing with men. Salvation by grace through faith is the salvation which may be any man's as truly as it may be any other man's. In chapter v. 12-21 the same doctrine is proved on the ground of the oneness, or solidarity, of man; or, in other words, on the ground of the universality of sin. That which constitutes one man a *man* constitutes every one a *man*; and as sin may be affirmed of one, it may be affirmed of all; and that which can save one, or is offered to one, is in the same sense offered to the whole race and can save the whole race.

V. 13. *For whosoever.* To prove that the same Lord of all is rich unto all who call upon him the

V. 13:—*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

V. 14:—*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

V. 15:—*And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

Apostle again quotes from the Jewish Scriptures. See Joel ii. 32. It should be observed that Paul does not make these "whosoever" of the Old Testament mean "whosoever of the Jews," or "whosoever of the elect people," for in that case they would have been no proof at all of the proposition which he has in mind. The prophet means and the apostle means *whosoever of all men*; for the very thing which he is here aiming to do is to show to the Jews that they ought not to feel aggrieved because the doctrine of salvation which he preaches includes all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, for this is quite in harmony with the utterances of their own prophets long ago; and if he was thus in accord with the teachings of their Scriptures why should they censure him for proclaiming this salvation to the Gentiles? Should not they, the Jews themselves, rather encourage him heartily in his work? For how shall they, the Gentiles, call on him in whom, etc. See next verses.

Vs. 14, 15. There are in this verse and the first of the next four questions, the implied answer to each of which is, "They can not do it." And the conclusion of the whole is, Therefore they should be sent, in order that they may preach, in order that those to

V. 16:—*But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?*

whom they are sent may hear, in order that they may believe, in order that they may call upon or pray to him. Or thus, Prayer is the result of faith, faith of hearing, hearing of preaching, preaching of sending. Therefore preachers should be sent; which conclusion is confirmed by another quotation from the Old Testament which commends with joyful gladness the messengers of the gospel. See Isaiah lii. 7. The one who does the sending here spoken of is God, not the Church.

The two expressions to "preach the gospel" and to "bring glad tidings" are the same words both in the Hebrew and Greek—to bring glad tidings of peace, to bring glad tidings of good things. See also Nahum i. 15. The Jews should have been able to see, as Paul did, the complete and higher fulfillment of these Old Testament prophecies, not in the return of Israel from exile, but in the proclamation of the gospel among all nations; and instead of finding fault with Paul, they themselves should have been a missionary people. But they were so blinded by self-righteousness that they could not see. They had understandings, but they perceived not.

V. 16. *But they have not all obeyed.* In strong contrast with what should have been true in regard to the Jews as a people, Paul states what actually is true. More had heard the gospel than had accepted it; and the Jewish people, the ones who should have accepted it most gladly, were the very ones who did not. Many individual Jews did, but

V. 17:—*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Paul is here speaking of them as a nation. He does not mention the Jews by name, but they knew well that they were not excluded from his thought. They knew that the words of the prophets quoted were spoken primarily of their own nation. Isaiah liii. 1.

The fact that the apostle quotes this testimony of the prophet shows that the rejection of the gospel by the Jewish people was foreknown of course. He was not surprised at the antagonism of the Jews who lived in Gentile countries to his preaching. But as God's foreknowledge did not destroy God's sovereignty, neither did his foreknowledge destroy human liberty and responsibility. If it destroyed the latter it must necessarily destroy the ability of God to prevent the foreknown event from occurring. Strictly speaking these various time-words, foreknowledge, fore-ordination, etc., are not applicable to God; and when the Scriptures use them of God they speak "after the manner of men," on account of our human weakness and limitations. God does not think his thoughts, or perform his mental acts, one at a time, but all at once. They become consecutive only when they come out of his eternity into our time.

V. 17. *So then*, etc. The Apostle reverts to v. 14. *And hearing by the word of God.* Faith proceeds *out of* hearing, is born *of* hearing; hearing is produced *by means of* the word preached. But he had said that all did not have faith (v. 16); and in the next verse he asks why, or rather he states what was *not* the reason.

V. 18:—*But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and, their words into the ends of the world.*

V. 19:—*But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.*

V. 18. *But I say, have they not heard?* Did they not hear? Yes, verily. The fact that they did not accept the gospel is not due to the fact that it was not preached to them, for it was preached to them; and it was preached to them not only in Judea, but in all parts of the world whither they (the Jews) have been scattered; and to such an extent, indeed, as to justify applying to this fact the words of the Psalmist. The words of the preached gospel have been sounded in all the earth, even unto the end of the world. (Ps. xix. 4.)

V. 19. *But I say, Did not Israel know?* The Apostle anticipates another excuse which the Jews might make for not having accepted the gospel. Yes, say they, we have heard the gospel, and so have the Gentiles. But we did not know that the glad tidings of which the prophets speak were to be proclaimed throughout the world to the Gentiles also; and the very fact that such has been done has caused us to judge the gospel adversely. But Paul answers, You surely should have known that the glad tidings of the same salvation were to be preached not only to the Jews but to the Gentiles also, for there is explicit testimony on this very point by two of the greatest prophets: First, Moses: Did not he say, "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people?" Deut. xxxii. 21. Does not this language plainly

V. 20:—*But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.*

imply that a message of grace should be proclaimed to the Gentiles, and that Israel would be affected by it precisely as you are now? If God should have so moved ancient Israel by his graciousness at any time toward other nations, why should you be surprised by his graciousness to them now? Isaiah, however, speaks even more plainly, words which should have abundantly prepared you for what is just now occurring in regard to the proclamation of the gospel to Jews and Gentiles respectively.

Foolish nation. Devoid of spiritual understanding. The Jews did not so regard themselves.

V. 20. *But Esaias.* See Isa. lxxv. 1. **Is very bold.** Is very plain and explicit. It required much boldness, however, in Isaiah's day to enable him to speak very plainly on a subject in regard to which the kings and people of Israel were so sensitive. **I was found of them.** The Gentiles. They had not sought the gospel, but when the gospel was presented to them many of them accepted it even more readily than the Jews to whom it was first preached, and who were a people of such avowed and strict religious pretensions; they as a people had even rejected the gospel. The prophet foresees this attitude of the Gentiles to the glad tidings of salvation which was preached unto them, and he speaks of it as a fact already accomplished.

V. 21. *But to Israel he saith.* Isa. lxxv. 2. But as to Israel, or concerning Israel; in contrast

V. 21:—*But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.*

with what was said of the Gentiles in the preceding verse. What unwearied love, what patience, what long-suffering, God had ever exercised toward the Jews, his chosen people! And they were still unbelieving, disobedient, gainsaying, ever calling his words and doings into question. Could they blame him if he should choose another people in their stead? Is it true that those with whom God pleads most are the ones who most resist him, thus making his very love to be the cause of a greater wrath? (Matt. xi. 20-24.)

THE FUTURE: THE ENIGMA SOLVED.

(Chap. XI.)

In setting forth the historical aspects of his doctrine of salvation Paul had shown in chap. ix. that the absolute sovereignty and freedom of God had not been placed under any irrevocable restrictions by the covenant relation into which he had entered with Israel; but that God retained the inalienable right to deprive the Jews of their exclusive privileges and to choose for himself a people from among those who had not hitherto been recognized as his people; and that no man should dare call God to account for his sovereign exercise of this right. But while the source of all God's actions thus lay in his own nature or sovereign will (which is but the expression of his nature), Paul shows in chap. x. that the particular direction which the exercise of the divine sovereignty had taken in regard to the Jews and Gentiles respectively was due

or was determined on their part by the unbelief of the one and the faith of the other.

In the chapter now before us the Apostle looks to the future and sees the solution of that which to the Jew was so great an enigma. Some of the Jews should not be cast away. A believing remnant should be spared, into which as a still vital stock, should be grafted the Gentile wild olive branch. But it had never been God's intention to cast away Israel forever. He does intend, however, to so overrule their unbelief as to facilitate the extension of the gospel among the Gentiles, and ultimately to make the conversion of the latter the means of converting the Jews. This fact should lead the Gentiles to exercise humility and fear rather than boasting or exultation, lest they themselves should be cast away. The Apostle concludes his sketch of these historical aspects of his subject with an expression of adoration to Him whose wisdom in the plan and conduct of the work of redemption is unsearchable, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things, and to whom be glory forever.

This chapter may be divided into the following parts :

1. Vs. 1-10. Israel not totally rejected, a remnant—"the election"—shall be saved, the hardness of the "rest," a means for the conversion of the Gentiles.

2. Vs. 11-32. The rejection of the Jews is not final, or irrevocable. They did not stumble in order that they might fall forever. As through the stumbling of the Jews the Gentiles were saved, so through the conversion of the Gentiles shall the Jews be ultimately saved.

Chap. XI., v. 1:—*I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

3. Vs. 33-36. Praise offered to God for his plan of salvation.

V. 1. *I say then.* In view of what has been said in chaps. ix. and x., and of the prophecies quoted from the Old Testament at the close of the last chapter, is it to be inferred that God has cast off his people totally and forever? *God forbid.* By no means. The very form of the question in the original Greek implies a negative answer, but to make the negative doubly strong, Paul does not leave it with a mere implication, but expresses it plainly and strongly. *His people.* The Jewish people as a whole, and not merely the believing remnant. God had not utterly cast away his people either as a whole or in part, for as the Apostle shows in this chapter even the unbelieving majority shall ultimately be saved through the ministry of the Gentiles. The Apostle, however, speaks first of the remnant who are saved at the outset, and instances himself who is an Israelite of genuine descent. He was not cast away; and so will God not cast away any who, like him, believe.

The word *also* which Paul here uses seems to imply that he meant to remind his readers that there were other believing Jews besides himself, and that he and they constitute the remnant which he mentions directly. Recognizing, as he did, the existence of this remnant, of which he himself was one, nothing that he had hitherto said should be so construed by his Jewish opponent as to make him teach that God was casting away the Jews totally. While he was an

V. 2:—*God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,*

Apostle chiefly to the Gentiles, he would nevertheless neither say nor imply any thing that might diminish the number of his own people who might be converted by his ministry. Such in substance is the more generally received view of Paul's reference to himself in this verse, and it seems to me to be correct. Hence, I do not believe, as do Meyer and some others, that the Apostle merely meant that he was altogether too good a Jew to believe that God had cast away his people, for if it had been true he surely would not have been too good a Jew to believe it.

V. 2. *Which he foreknew.* Was all Israel foreknown, or only the remnant? If by the foreknown all Israel is meant, does the Apostle refer to the literal or to the spiritual Israel? Hodge, following Calvin, Luther, and others, thinks that the people who are here spoken of as foreknown are the spiritual Israel. Stuart, Meyer, and others, however, think that the literal Israel, or Jewish nation is meant, and this view is undoubtedly more in harmony with what to me seems to be the whole line of thought of the Apostle, not only in this chapter but from the beginning of chap. ix. He is speaking throughout of the Jews as a people or nation, on the one hand, and of the Gentiles as a people, on the other hand. In chap. viii. 29 the foreknown are believers, of whatever nationality; but here the foreknown are the Jews as a people, and they are the only *nation* whom God ever did foreknow and elect to be the one through which he would realize his purpose of salvation. "The

V. 3:—*Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*

V. 4:—*But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*

V. 5:—*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

Israelites contemporary with Jesus might reject him; an indefinite series of generations may for ages perpetuate this fact of national unbelief. God is under no pressure; time can stretch out as long as he pleases. He will add, if need be, ages to ages, until there come at length the generation disposed to open their eyes and freely welcome their Messiah. God foreknew this *nation* as believing and saved, and sooner or later they can not fail to be both." (Godet.) This, to say the very least, is the hope which Paul's words warrant, and which hope shall be more and more nearly realized as the Gentiles more and more nearly do their whole duty toward the long neglected and despised Jews.

Wot ye not, etc. This sentence, in the Revised Version, and also in the Greek, begins with an "or." Or wot ye not, etc. The meaning is: Or, if you are not yet willing to accept the truth of my statement, do you not know what the Scripture saith, etc.? See 1 Kings xix. 10-18. *Elias*. The Greek form of the Hebrew name *Elijah*.

V. 5. *A remnant according to the election of grace*. The words, "election of grace," do not refer to the election of the believing individuals who make up the remnant. Israel as a nation was by

V. 6:—*And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*

God's gracious act elected or chosen to be his people, his Church, the recipient of his revelations, through whom he would instruct and save the world; and in accordance with this fact there had ever been in the nation a number of individuals making in the aggregate several thousands who were true and faithful to Jehovah. It was so in the dark days of Elijah, and of Paul; it would ever be so, and the Apostle argues from the abiding existence in the nation of such a remnant that God has not irrevocably rejected the nation, but that at some future day, in God's own good time, the whole mass of the people should be brought to the saving recognition of Jesus as their true Messiah. And it is this ever-existing believing remnant which is here spoken of as "according to the election of grace."

V. 6. *And if by grace, then it is no more of works.* If the election of Israel, or the consequent preservation of the faithful remnant was an act of God's free grace it could not have proceeded from their merits, for grace and merits exclude each the other. The election begun in grace and continued in grace, never at any time becoming a matter of works or merit. Grace can not gradually cease to be grace and become works.

But why should the second half of the verse have been added by the Apostle? It is easy to see why if he was aiming to show simply that the election must be a matter of grace alone or of works alone, and not a matter of both. But this is not what he is aiming

V. 7:—*What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded*

to show; it is rather a premise of another argument which Paul makes against the Jews' favorite doctrine of merit as the ground of their claim upon the divine favor. To say that works or merit is the ground of it and yet call it grace or favor is a contradiction of terms, for if one bestows upon me only what I have earned it can not be said to be an act of grace. The thought is associated in the Apostle's mind with the word election, and his argument briefly stated is this:

The election is obliged to be a matter either of grace or merit; it can not be a matter of both.

It is not a matter of merit or works, for in this case the thing called divine grace or *favor* becomes a non-entity.

Conclusion: Therefore, it is a matter of grace alone.

It is proper to observe, however, that the clause of the verse referring to works is omitted by some of the best ancient manuscripts and versions, by the Revised English Version, and by the most eminent recent critical commentators. Fritzsche and Reiche defend its genuineness. But the sense of the verse is essentially the same in either case.

V. 7. *What then?* What conclusion follows, as to the present state of the Jews, from the truths just stated? This follows: "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for," etc. What was it that Israel sought? Not righteousness, or justification, by works, for neither the election or chosen believing remnant obtained this. Nor was it the honor of being

V. 8:—(*According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,;) unto this day.*)

the Church (as Macknight says) after having been once rejected on account of their unbelief. But what Israel as a people or nation sought was simply righteousness or justification, and the reason why it did not obtain it was, Israel sought it by works. The election or believing remnant did obtain it because it sought it by faith. The rest were blinded, or, as the word more exactly means, *hardened*. By whom were they hardened? God. In what sense and to what extent had God hardened them? See the next three verses.

V. 8. *According as it is written.* Deut. xxix. 4; Isa. xxix. 9-11. *God hath given them.* That is, Israel. *The spirit of slumber.* Of deep sleep, or, as others prefer to render it, torpor, or stupefaction. God destroyed their spiritual sensibility, their power of spiritual discernment. The eye of the soul was paralyzed so that it could no longer see. God does this, not vindictively, not arbitrarily, but wisely and in mercy, "when he wills for a time to give over a man who perseveres in resisting him to a blindness such that he punishes himself, as it were, with his own hand," and is thus, it may be, brought to repentance. See Matt. xiii. 14, 15; John xii. 40. From him that hath the power of discerning the truth and does not use it shall be taken away even that which he hath, until excess of sin becomes excess of misery, and the sinner is caused, peradventure, to turn about.

V. 9:—*And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:*

V. 9. *And David saith.* Ps. lxix. 22, 23. *Let their table be made a snare,* etc. As, for instance, let them think that they are drinking choice wine, whereas they are swallowing a drug that strikes them with stupefaction. In offering this prayer the Psalmist had in mind the enemies of God's Church and cause, of which he himself was the representative. We can not pray for the prosperity of this cause without praying for the adversity of its enemies—the crushing of the serpent's head and all the serpent's seed. In the Psalmist's day these enemies were regarded as those who were arrayed against the theocracy or Church in David's time. In the Apostle's time these enemies included even the mass of the Jewish people themselves, who had set themselves in array against the gospel. Hence, the Apostle does no violence to the spirit or intent of the Psalmist's prayer when he applies it to the Jews, they being no less truly enemies than were those whom the Psalmist had immediately in mind.

A trap. “A wild beast grasps at food and falls into a trap.” So may the enemies of Thee, in careless ease and prosperity, be ensnared as to their hearts.

A stumblingblock. Let their material prosperity be that over which they stumble and hurt themselves. *A recompense.* A punishment. Is it not true that one's greatest prosperity and apparent peace may become in God's hands the means of severest punishment, and thus of bringing the sinner to repentance?

V. 10:—*Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.*

V. 11:—*I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.*

V. 10. *Let their eyes be darkened.* Ps. lxix. 23. *Bow down their back alway.* As if in deep dejection. The spirit or sense of this verse is the same as the preceding. The words have been fulfilled in the case of the Jews as a people, for their backs have long been bowed down in deep dejection.

The Apostle makes the quotations from the Old Testament not word for word, but giving simply the sense of the Hebrew. In some instances he quotes not the Hebrew but the Greek version, as in this verse.

V. 11-15. Having shown the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy in the hardening of the mass of the Jewish people; and having also shown that although God did the hardening, he did it because of their persistent unbelief; the Apostle now proceeds to show that the purpose which God has in view in this punishment is, not the irrevocable rejection of the Jews, but the salvation of the Gentiles and ultimately of the Jews also.

V. 11. *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall?* Have the Jews stumbled at Christ, and is it the divine purpose in their stumbling that they should fall forever under the condemnation of God? "By no means," answers the Apostle, "is this the purpose or end which God has in view in their stumbling." And then he proceeds in this and the

following three verses to point out the two ends which God does have in view ; 1. The salvation of the Gentiles, 2. The final restoration of the Jews themselves.

Through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles. The word "fall" here is not the same Greek word as in the first part of the verse, and does not express quite the same idea. The Apostle does not of course mean to deny that the Jews fell, and then immediately to affirm it. The word in the second clause means a trespass or offense, such as the Jews were guilty of in stumbling at Christ, the Stone of stumbling and the Rock of offense. Chapter ix. 32, 33. The word "fall" in the first part of the verse denotes the fall which follows when one stumbles or strikes his foot against an obstacle, and carries with it here the idea of permanent prostration. The Jews did indeed not only stumble, they also fell—that is, they were rejected as God's chosen nation. But it was not God's purpose that they should fall in such way as to remain prostrate forever.

Nor does the Apostle mean that God in any way forced Israel either to stumble or to fall. The well-known historical facts, and the character of God as recognized both by Paul and the Jews, were obviously against any such meaning. God may have a purpose in view in regard to any event without himself being the morally responsible cause of that event. He did not cause Israel to reject Christ, but he had one or more purposes in view which he would accomplish by this act of Israel. Had the Jews laid aside their prejudices, and their self-righteousness, and accepted the righteousness of God which is by faith, they would have become the willing instruments in the spread of the *de-Judaized* gospel among all nations, and all na-

V. 12:—*Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?*

tions, including the Jews, would have become one nation in Christ—God's one people. But as the Jews would not do this, and as the gospel must spread abroad whether or not, the honor of being any longer God's chosen people must pass from them, and even their hostility to the gospel is divinely utilized to the more rapid progress of the gospel among the nations. The more the Jews oppose it the more rapidly and extensively did it scatter abroad from Jerusalem, and the more it was divested of the Jewish element the more acceptable would it be to the Jew-hating Gentile. While, therefore, God did not cause the Jews' unbelief, thus did he in the first place purpose to overrule that unbelief.

To provoke them to jealousy. God's purpose was, in the second place, to provoke the Jews to jealousy, to awaken their ancient love, and thus recover them to himself. He was acting toward them in love and mercy, and not with a view to their final ruin.

V. 12. *The fall of them.* The trespass, or offense, of Israel as a nation. *The riches of the world.* "The state of grace into which the Gentiles are introduced by faith in a free salvation." *The diminution of them.* The true Israel was greatly reduced in number by the rejection of the mass of the Jewish nation on account of unbelief. *The riches of the Gentiles.* Though the Jewish nation was greatly diminished by the casting away of the unbelieving portion, this nation, regarded as the Church,

V. 13:—*For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office :*

V. 14:—*If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.*

was greatly increased by the incorporation into it of many believing Gentile peoples who were thereby enriched with the riches of grace. *Their fullness.* The whole body of Jewish people. If God could so overrule the unbelief of the many Jews and the faith of the few for the good of the other nations, how much more rapidly and widely shall the gospel extend its dominion over the hearts and lives of men everywhere as the number of believing Israel is increased.

V. 13. *I speak to you Gentiles.* Paul was writing in large part to Gentile readers, and he writes in this chapter on the future restoration of the Jews—a subject which should still be one of very great interest to the Gentiles, for to the Jews they owe an evangelical debt which they can never fully repay.

I magnify mine office. Paul's office was that of the apostle of the Gentiles, but in writing about and laboring for the salvation of the Jews, he was magnifying his office, he was true to its proper functions; for in laboring for the salvation of the Jews he was also therein laboring for the welfare of the Gentiles, for he had just said that great good would accrue to all Gentiles from the conversion of the Jews. Hence, he could not be accused of departing from his duties as an apostle to the Gentiles in laboring also for the conversion of Israel.

V. 14. *If by any means.* That is, I speak to you Gentiles, if by any means I may provoke or

V. 15:—*For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*

stimulate to emulation, etc. **Emulation.** The same word translated "jealousy" in verse 11; also rendered jealousy in this verse by the Revised Version. The Greek word means both, jealousy being rather the inward feeling of which emulation is the outward expression. **My flesh.** My fellow Jews. What Paul as a Jew wished to do was to stimulate his fellow countrymen to accept the gospel by making them see that the Gentiles, the outsiders, would come in and get all the divine blessing and they themselves none unless they bestirred themselves. What he as an apostle of the Gentiles wished to do was to make the conversion of the Jews the means of a yet more world-wide blessing to the Gentile. In his twofold capacity, therefore, of Jew and apostle his large heart and large effort sought the salvation of all men. So with the minister of the gospel to-day, so with every Christian; he may be an American, but he is also an apostle, and whether in the one capacity or the other his longing and his effort must embrace also the nations afar off.

Some of them. Sad words. Even Paul, the man of limitless heart, could hope for the salvation of only a comparatively small part of his fellow Jews, the most favored of people.

V. 15. **The casting away of them.** The cessation, or refusal, on God's part, any longer to recognize the Jewish nation as his people. **The receiving of them.** The acceptance of them again by God as

his people on account of their acceptance of the gospel which they once and so long rejected. *Life from the dead*. Not the resurrection of the body, as some eminent commentators strangely think; but, simply a wonderful and glorious event, and of great and world-wide benefit to the Gentiles. Such, in substance, the majority of commentators. If the rejection of the Jewish people on account of their unbelief and rejection of Christ should be so overruled as to be a great blessing to the Gentiles, how much greater blessing may be looked for when this long unbelieving people shall accept Christ? If a people's curse can be so great a blessing, what *will* the same people blessed be? Such will be the universal spiritual quickening that it can be compared to nothing but a life from the dead, and hence it is here figuratively so called. The apostle now goes on to show,

(1) That this future glorious restoration of the Jews is in itself very probable because it is in accordance with their original consecration or sacred (not sinless) character as a people. (Verse 16.)

(2) That this fact should awaken in the Gentiles "a feeling of profound regard for Israel"—(Vs. 17, 18), a caution of which Gentile Christendom has ever been, and is yet, only too unmindful.

(3) That the same fact should also inspire the Gentiles with a feeling of humility and watchfulness lest God who spared not Israel on account of unbelief might also reject them—the Gentiles—on account of proud boasting. (Vs. 19-21.)

V. 16. *If the first-fruit*. A figurative expression denoting the Israelitish nation in its very beginning

V. 16:—*For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.*

V. 17:—*And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*

in Abraham and the patriarchs. In the consecration to God of the first-fruit of the harvest the whole harvest was consecrated. In the consecration of the first-born all subsequent offsprings were consecrated. Whatever may be affirmed of the root may also be affirmed of the branches, for from the former the latter derive their quality. So the fact that Israel in its origin was sacred to God renders it only the more probable in itself that it will be so in its future generations. No people has ever stood in such a relation to God as the Jews even still sustain toward him.

V. 17. *And thou.* The individual Gentile reader. *A wild olive tree.* The Gentile world is the wild olive tree; the individual Gentile believer is the graft which the Gentile wild olive tree furnishes to the true Church which is here also personified as a tree of which Abraham and the other patriarchs are the roots. The dead or fruitless branches broken off from this tree are the individual unbelieving Jews who constituted the mass of the nation. *Among them.* Literally, in them. The Gentile branches were grafted either in the stumps left from the broken-off Jewish branches, or among the Jewish branches which were left on the tree. In either case the grafted branches of the wild olive became partakers of the fruit-producing sap of the true olive tree—the true Church. Paul's reasoning here plainly implies the essential

V. 18:—*Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*

V. 19:—*Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*

V. 20:—*Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear.*

identity of the Church of the Old and New Testaments; and hence it proves plainly that Paul's conception of the Church was not that of something distinct from and antagonistic to Israel. He was nearer to Israel than the Jews themselves were.

V. 18. ***Boast not against the branches.*** Glory not over, despise not, the cast-off Jews. If Gentile Christendom, however, has not for centuries gloried over the cast off Jew, it has nevertheless sadly neglected and ill-treated him. ***But if thou boast.*** If thou gloriest, it is nevertheless true that you Gentiles owe your salvation to the Jews, and not conversely. If there had not been a Jewish stock, a true Church in Jewish germ, into which you could be grafted, it would have been sad for you. If you glory over the Jews you glory in the face of this fact.

V. 19. ***Thou wilt say then.*** Thou Gentile wilt say then, that is in view of the statement (verse 17), that the Jewish branches were broken off, that it was done solely in order that we Gentiles might be grafted in. In saying "I," in this verse, the Gentile speaker represents not only himself but all other Gentile grafts.

V. 20. ***Well.*** Well; suppose they were broken off in order that you Gentiles might be grafted in; sup-

V. 21:—*For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

V. 22:—*Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

pose that was a purpose which God had in view; it is nevertheless true that they would not have been broken off had it not been for their unbelief; and it is also true that you do not remain in as grafts because of any unconditional favoritism toward you on the part of God; you stand by your faith, just as they fell by their want of it. ***Be not high minded.*** Do not exalt yourselves, but rather *fear*, take heed, lest you yourselves fall even as did the unbelieving Jews. Some of the Gentile Churches of Asia Minor were rejected of God in a sense no less true than were the Jews themselves. (Rev. ii. iii.)

V. 21. ***For.*** The reason for the caution at the close of verse 20. ***Lest he also spare not thee.*** Neither will he spare thee. The Revised Version, and the now generally accepted Greek text adopts the reading “neither” instead of “lest,” “not.” In either case a real danger is pointed to that the Gentiles in the future might experience the same awful rejection which the Jews had brought upon themselves.

V. 22. ***Behold.*** Paul is still addressing the Gentile reader. ***Goodness and severity of God.*** Goodness toward the believing Gentiles, severity toward the unbelieving Jews. “The Apostle with masterly skill sets both sides of the case at once before his readers, that goodness and severity, seen side by

V. 23:—*And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.*

side, may stir both love and fear." (Gifford) **Which fell.** The Jewish nation which by unbelief stumbled over Christ and fell. **Toward thee.** The Gentile Christians. **If thou continue.** They might forfeit God's goodness, causing it to cease toward them, turning it into severity, by abandoning their faith, by being high-minded, by not taking heed. To continue in the faith, to be humble-minded, to be watchful, is to continue in God's goodness. Paul is not speaking here of the cutting off and final rejection of individuals, but of the Gentile portion of the Church on condition of their failure to observe the warning which he here solemnly administers to them. The warning is as pertinent to-day as it was in Paul's time. Is it being heeded? Or is it indeed true that our Gentile Christendom is fast reaching the time here foreseen by Paul when it too should be cut off because of its ceasing to "continue in his goodness." No statute of limitation can ever release it from that old, old debt which it owes to the Jews, and if it pay it not—then the cutting off!

V. 23. **They also.** The rejected Jewish people. **If they abide not still in unbelief.** The salvation of the Jewish people at some future period of the world's history is here asserted by Paul as an hypothesis; in verses 26, 27, he asserts it as a certainty. But why does Paul here say, *God is able to graff them in?* Does he mean that God is able to restore them if they abandon their unbelief and have faith? Or, that he is able to remove their unbelief itself and

V. 24:—*For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

thus restore them? These questions have been variously answered by commentators. The simple meaning seems to be that there is no obstacle on God's side that can hinder him; it will be a great, a stupendous work, this restoration of the long alienated and unbelieving Jewish people; but God's power is adequate to any work which he wills to perform; and so far as God's own attitude toward the Jews is concerned, it is a good deal more probable, humanly speaking, that he should in the course of his providence restore his ancient and long-loved people, than that he should ever have grafted in the Gentiles. The thought of its requiring an exercise of *divine power* to graff the Jews, the broken-off branch, again after so long a time, may have been suggested to Paul by his use here of what most scholars regard as an unnatural botanical figure. It is not true to nature that when a lifeless branch is cut from its stock that it is ever grafted again on that stock. For the accomplishment of such work a power above nature is necessary; it is as "life from the dead" (verse 15), a power of God alone that can do it, by whatever process that power may be exerted.

V. 24. *Grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree.* The Gentiles had no affinity to begin with for the religion or gospel which Paul preached; it was to them "foolishness." But the Jews had been brought up from of old in the true religion as Jehovah's own people, and hence this true religion as

V. 25:—*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

preached by the Apostle was, so to speak, their own olive tree; and hence, although they had been cast off as dead and fruitless branches, it was antecedently more probable, so far as God was concerned, that in his almighty power he should graff them back than that he should ever have grafted in the wild olive. "As men look upon the children of their early friends with kinder feelings than the children of strangers," says Dr. Hodge, "so God refers to this fact to make us sensible that he still retains purposes of peculiar mercy toward his ancient people. The restoration of this people, therefore, to the blessings of the Church of God is far from being an improbable event."

V. 25. *For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant.* But the restoration of Israel at some future time not mentioned, is not only *possible* and *probable*, but it is also *certain*, a fact of which the Apostle proceeds to inform his Gentile brethren. The formal manner, "I would not have you ignorant, brethren," in which he introduces his statement, shows that he regarded it as an important fact.

This mystery. The restoration of Israel to the divine favor referred to in the latter part of the verse, and explicitly stated in the next verse. The word "mystery" in the writings of Paul denotes, not something incomprehensible, but a truth unknown and unknowable until God revealed it. See 1 Cor. ii. 7, 10; iv. 1; xiii. 2; Eph. i. 9; iii. 4, etc.

Blindness. The same Greek word is, in the King James' Version, in Mark iii. 5, rendered "hardness;" it is also so rendered here in the Revised Version. The word properly means the covering with a callous—a hard substance which forms on the hands or feet as an effect of friction or pressure. It destroys the sensibility of the part. Thus the heart of Israel was hardened by unbelief so that it was not sensible to spiritual impressions. The word blindness, though not so accurate as a rendering, conveys a good meaning if we should conceive of the heart as that faculty whereby moral or spiritual truth is perceived. But the real thought here is that Israel was *callous* hearted.

In part. This does not mean that the heart of Israel was only partially hardened, or blinded (Calvin), but that there were some Jews of whom this hardness could not be affirmed. It implies also that there always would be some believers among that people—an abiding remnant.

Lest ye be wise in your own conceit. Lest they, the Gentiles, should boast over the Jews that they were wise in accepting the gospel whereas the latter were foolish in rejecting it. There was nothing in the salvation of the Gentiles or rejection of the Jews, that should cause the former to glory at the expense of the latter, for after all, Israel was rejected only partially and temporarily.

The fullness of the Gentiles. All the Gentile nations. **Be come in.** The Gentile nations, but not necessarily every individual Gentile, shall successively be converted to the gospel, until finally all shall be Christian nations; the time when this shall be is not definitely stated. It depends upon the wisdom and energy with which the Church carries on its mis-

V. 26:—*And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

sion work. But *then* shall be the “fullness” of Israel also (verse 12).* And so the first people called shall be the last to come in.

V. 26. **And so.** Referring to the coming in of the Gentiles as the condition upon which will follow the salvation of Israel. ***All Israel shall be saved.*** An explicit and important prophecy. Some commentators, as Bengel, Olshausen, and others, limit the words “all Israel” to the totality of the believing remnant. Of every generation of Jewish history there

* “It is almost incredible,” says Godet, “that our Reformers should have held out obstinately, as they have done, against a thought so clearly expressed”—the future salvation of the Jewish people as predicted in the above passage; though it is not necessary to understand the Apostle Paul here as committing himself to any view concerning the “millennium.” Olshausen on this verse quotes some remarkable words of Luther, as follows: “A Jewish heart is so stock-stone-devil-iron-hard, that in no wise can it be moved; they are young devils; damned to hell; to convert these devil’s brats (as some fondly ween out of the Epistle to the Romans) is impossible.” And adds: “From this, as from other expressions, it is manifest that the knowledge of the last events of the world’s history was a province closed against the great Reformer”—as it was indeed against all the Reformers, as they devoted but little attention to the study of eschatology. The Gentile Church, however, is more and more clearly recognizing its indebtedness to the Jews, and is more and more earnestly repaying it. Luther and the other Reformers, if they were living now, would write and act in a very different manner in respect to this cast off people.

V. 27:—*For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

will be some who accept Christ as the true Messiah and Savior, and all these shall be saved. Others, as Luther, Calvin, and Grotius, limit the words to the spiritual Israel, whether composed of Jews or Gentiles or both. Others, as Fritzsche and Tholuck, make the words, "all Israel," mean comparatively all, the greater number. None of these views, however, meets the requirements of the context or the demands of the explicit form of the statement which Paul here makes. The words mean the whole nation of Israel; there shall come a time when there shall no longer be a rejected, unbelieving portion, but the entire Israel shall accept Christ. This is, in substance, the view of Stuart, Hodge, Meyer, Godet, and many others. It is hardly to be supposed, however, that the Apostle means that in that day of future restoration not a single Jew shall be left out; but if there be any unbelieving Jews the number will be so small as not to come into the reckoning. There shall no longer be any distinction recognized between saved and unsaved *Israel*; no longer any such thing as *Judaism* in the present sense of the term, but only a *Christianity*; there shall be neither *Gentile* nor *Jew*, but only *Christians*. The crumbling wall of partition shall be utterly obliterated.

As it is written. Isaiah lix. 20, Jer. xxxi. 33. The same Spirit who revealed to Paul the above "mystery" (verse 25), also enabled him to see in it the fulfillment of the words of the ancient prophets.

V. 27. **This is my covenant.** The promised

V. 28:—*As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.*

V. 29:—*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

restoration, or the turning away of ungodliness from Jacob. In that day when Israel's unbelief shall be removed God will renew his ancient covenant in all its spiritual import. Isaiah lix. 21, xxvii. 9. While Paul was inspired as to the facts to which he refers in these verses, he was not inspired as to the time when the events should transpire. Hence, the definite time is not stated, and no one knows when it will be.

V. 28. *Enemies for your sakes.* The sake of the Gentiles. This verse simply means that whereas God has rejected the Jews, has treated them as if he were their enemy, for the sake of the Gentiles overruling their unbelief and hostility to Christ in such way as to work out thereby the salvation of the Gentiles, he nevertheless in view of his ancient choice of Israel to be his people, greatly loves the Jews for the sake of their fathers. He can not, humanly speaking, think of the ancient relation between himself and his "friend" Abraham, and the other patriarchs, without feeling tenderly toward the wayward children—the undutiful and prodigal sons.

V. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* He does not regret that he bestowed gifts upon Israel, he does not regret that he called Israel. The love that has ever throbbed in his divine heart for those who have been from of old "the

V. 30:—*For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:*

V. 31:—*Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.*

V. 32:—*For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.*

sheep of his pasture," will pursue them through the ages until they are gathered back in his fold.

Vs. 30, 31. ***For as ye in times past***, etc. Ye Gentile Christians. The meaning of these verses, which make but one sentence, is: For as God so overruled the unbelief and disobedience of the Jews as to cause the Gentiles thereby to obtain mercy, or to be incorporated into his Church, so will he also overrule this salvation of the Gentiles, or this mercy to the Gentiles, so as to bring about thereby a bestowal of mercy upon the Jews. He will make the rejection of the Jews contribute to the bringing in of the Gentiles, and this in turn to the bringing in again of the now rejected Jews. For, etc.

V. 32. ***For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all.*** This verse is to be taken in close connection with verses 30, 31. Together they constitute an epitome of God's plan of salvation in its historical aspects. *Them all*, means, not all Israel exclusively, not all Gentiles exclusively, but *all* both Jews and Gentiles. The word *concluded* means *shut up* to one course, or in one place, to be left without alternative. From what we have already learned of Paul's teaching we know that he does not mean that God in any way *forced* either Jews or Gentiles to disobey him in order that he might

V. 33:—*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

play off, as it were, Jew and Gentile, the one against the other, for the purpose of displaying his wisdom and mercy in saving both. Nor do the Apostle's words in this verse teach any such doctrine. Whatever may be said of God's sovereignty his evident desire was to have mercy upon all. The Apostle has already informed us, however, that the cause of God's action toward men, whether Jews or Gentiles, is two-fold: First, on man's part, it was man's own unbelief; second, on God's part the cause lay in his own nature. While God, therefore, did not decree the unbelief or disobedience, he did decree to so use it as to make it subservient to human salvation. He would make this enemy of human welfare slay itself. The meaning of this verse then, as it seem to me, is the same as that of verse 31, expressed in other words. That is, in the working out historically of his plan of human salvation, God so wrought as to omit none; Israel as a whole and the Gentiles as a whole are both included, or shut up within the scope of the working of that plan. And a circumstance that makes the divine working only the more wonderful is, that he so determines, or so overrules, or uses the wandering of each as to make it the means of the in-bringing of all the others. In this view of the matter it does not seem at all strange that the Apostle should exclaim in the next verse.

Vs. 33, 34. *O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* This is the doxology with

V. 34:—*For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?*

V. 35:—*Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?*

V. 36:—*For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

which the Apostle concludes his great argument. A Being who can so plan and work for another being who is himself a free being, and who, alas, is also prone to sin as the sparks fly upward, must indeed be a Being of inexhaustible resources, infinite in wisdom and knowledge, and unsearchable in his production and use of expedients whereby to accomplish the salvation of a fallen world. Who could have anticipated him? Who could have forecast that he would do thus and so? Who could have advised him? And is it possible that he can ever be repaid for what he has done? See Isa. xl. 13; Job xli. 11.

V. 36. ***For of him . . . through him . . . to him are all things.*** And that is the reason why the above questions must be answered in the negative. God is absolutely independent. All things are *of him*, he being their Creator; all things are *through him*, he being their upholder and governor; all things are *to him*, he being the One to whom all things point and to whose will they are subject, and to whose glory they tend.

VI.

THE DOCTRINE IN ITS ETHICAL ASPECTS.

(Application to Christian life.)

CHAPTERS XII.—XIV.

Why should the Apostle so exhort his readers to live as enjoined in these chapters since he has already abundantly shown that his doctrine of justification must in the very nature of the case be productive of such a life?

“As blossom and fruit,” says Olshausen, “grow only from a sound root, so too it is only from faith in Christ, and in the redemption wrought by him, that true moral life proceeds.” The right faith naturally produces the right life, and the right life springs of necessity out of the right faith. But whence then the need of any ethical, or practical, discussion and exhortation? Why should light be exhorted to shine or fire to warm, or faith to manifest itself in such sort of life as it is by its very nature bound to do? And thus is raised an important practical question. The answer is,

1. The life of faith, the moral life, the life which is in a true sense the outflow of that inner principle which constitutes the man a Christian at heart, is regulated by laws different from those which govern physical life, in so far as in the domain of physical nature there is no such thing as freedom; whereas, in

the sphere of the moral, human liberty is an ever-present factor which may influence favorably or unfavorably the outward manifestation of the inner principle of faith. The light *must* shine, but there is no physical law which can make it shine outwardly when placed under a bushel. The tree when planted *must* produce its fruit, but *not* unless it be protected from frost and other injurious influences which do not lie in the nature of the planted tree. But the candle can not remove the bushel, the tree can not protect itself, whereas *man*, by reason of the fact *that he is man*, and not a tree, can himself contribute to his own development. There is nothing wrong with the faith, provided it be such a faith as Paul has described in the preceding part of this epistle. By the exercise of faith we *are* justified, we are *sanctified*, we *are* finally glorified, it *is the nature* of faith to do just what the Apostle says it will do, and when this principle is once in the heart it is there abidingly. But its development and manifestation outwardly are affected largely by influences which are extraneous to itself, and to the partial or total destruction of which the man may himself contribute. This seems to me to be the doctrine of not only Paul but also of our Lord. While therefore we can not admonish the candle to shine or the planted tree to produce its fruit, it is logically legitimate to admonish the believer to manifest his faith, or to produce certain fruits in his life, notwithstanding it is the very nature of faith to do this.

2. But another fact that renders the admonitions of this part of his epistle logically pertinent in the face of what he has said of the nature of faith, is the circumstance that the quality or character of the tree can oftentimes be determined only from the character of

the fruit which it produces. If I desire to know whether the faith which is in me is the faith of which Paul writes, it may be very helpful in seeking an answer to this question for me to compare the known fruits of my faith with the fruits as herein described by Paul. I do not think, however, that this is the chief value which Paul himself meant to attach to this part of his epistle.

3. At the time when Paul wrote, the religion of Christ, whether regarded as an inner principle or as an outward manner of life, was far from being well understood by either Jews or Gentiles. And the Apostle knew that although Christians are not *of* the world they are nevertheless *in* the world; that no man can live to himself alone, that there is obliged to be social organization and order, and hence compromises; every Christian must necessarily stand in certain relations to every other Christian, and to the Church, the civil government, and to other men generally. And hence the question would naturally arise, how shall this doctrine of justification and sanctification by faith be applied to these various relations of the Christian's constant life? The Christian *conscience* would not spring up suddenly and spontaneously from the doctrine, but could be best formed and enlightened by a process of instruction specially directed thereto; and hence Paul begins by bringing into the *consciousness* of the Christians several lines along which their faith or religious character should manifest itself.

(1) First of all there must be thorough *consecration* to God as a basis of Christian conduct.

(2) Certain duties in relation to the Church.

(3) In relation to the civil government.

Chap. XII., V. 1:—*I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

(4) In relation to certain matters in themselves indifferent.

Hence, it seems to me that in following up his doctrinal discussion with these earnest exhortations as to how the Christian ought to live the Apostle betrays no apprehension that his teaching concerning the way of salvation might indeed so far open the way for sinning in order that grace might abound, as to render it necessary for him to lay down a special set of precepts as a safeguard. It is not to be construed as in any sense a withdrawing or softening of his positive teachings in regard to the justifying and sanctifying efficacy of faith.

CONSECRATION.

(Chap. XII.)

V. 1. *I beseech you, therefore.* The word "therefore" connects this second or practical part of the epistle with the first or doctrinal part. The holy life which the Christians are here earnestly exhorted to live in their various relations, to one another, the Church, the State, the world, is the natural sequel to the doctrinal discussion. Such a way of salvation logically implies such a way of living. *By the mercies of God.* The word "mercies" here is in the Greek *oiktermos*; in chap. xi. 30-32, and elsewhere it is *eleas*. The latter word denotes rather the *act* of bestowing mercy; the former, that infinite compassion of God's heart which causes him to bestow mercy. By reminding his readers, whether Gentile or Jewish,

of this infinite divine compassion, the outcome of which is the wondrous plan of salvation which he has just sketched, would the Apostle persuade them to present their bodies, etc. Paul says *mercies*, that is he uses the plural form of the word, by way of emphasis, the divine compassion being presented to the contemplation of his readers in all the details of the plan of salvation, every one of which was the outflow of this fountain of infinite pity. It is the *love* wherewith God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, etc. And because Paul thinks of the world as suffering and miserable that which is elsewhere called *love* is here called *compassion*.

That ye present your bodies. Paul thus reminds his readers that such compassion, manifested in such a sacrifice, on God's part, would naturally be supposed to demand and to be followed by a sacrifice of thanksgiving on their part. He speaks in the familiar language of the Mosaic service, according to which the "sin-offering" was followed by the "peace-offering" as an expression of gratitude. As Christ's body has been presented as a sin-offering for you, so present yours as a thank-offering.

Your bodies. Which hitherto had been the instruments of unrighteousness; chap. vi. 12, 13, 19. The word "body" is also naturally suggested by the word "sacrifice." It was the body of the sacrificial victim that was presented as a whole burnt-offering. It was consecrated or formally set apart to this purpose. So should be the body of the believer. Paul of course does not mean the body apart from the mind or spirit, but he especially mentions the body because it is the instrument through which the mind acts: and it is of the believer's conduct that he is to speak in the re-

maining part of the epistle. And besides it was conceivable that one might be consecrated in spirit, as indeed all true Christians must be, without being consecrated as to the body—that is, in outward act and conduct.

A living sacrifice. Here again the Apostle's language is in harmony with the well known Mosaic requirement that the body of the animal was to be consecrated while it was alive; and he means that the body of the true Christian must be the ever active instrument of God's will.

Holy. Not, of course, in the sense of real moral purity, for holiness in this sense can not be predicated of the body. But as the body while it was the instrument of unrighteousness, devoted to the service of sin, is said to be impure or unholy, so when consecrated to and actively engaged in the service of God, it is called pure or holy. It is holy in that it is actively consecrated. Such a body is *acceptable* or well-pleasing, as the ancient sacrifice rightly offered was called a sweet-smelling savor.

Which is your reasonable service. Paul does not, it seems to me, mean "your spiritual service," in contrast with their (the Jews') ritual or ceremonial service, though Meyer, Gifford, and others think that he does mean this. But is it not more in harmony with the connection of this ethical or practical part of the epistle as compared with the doctrinal part, to suppose that Paul here means that the presentation of their bodies as a living sacrifice to God is a "logical" service—that is, just such a service as those who have in them that principle of faith which he has described, would naturally or reasonably be expected to render? So it seems to me, though most commentators are against this view.

Reasonable Service.—"Spiritual service," as contrasted with the material or ritual service of the Jews. Or, "rational service," as contrasted with irrational animal victims. Most commentators hold one or the other of these interpretations. It seems to me best, however, to take the word "reasonable," or its Greek equivalent, in a sense which is also a very common one, "agreeable to reason," "logical:" in which case the Apostle means that the presentation of their bodies as a living sacrifice is just such a service as those, etc. I prefer this interpretation for the following reasons:

1. It seems to me to be in harmony with the connection between this practical part of the epistle and the doctrinal part as explained above.

2. The Apostle is not contrasting one kind of service with another, but is answering an implied inquiry on the part of Christians as to what kind of service theirs should be. If it had been a contrast with the old Jewish or with heathen worship he would rather have said *a* reasonable service, instead of *your* reasonable service.

3. But the old Jewish service was after all, in so far as it was service at all, no less *spiritual* than the Christian. It was so understood and intended to be by Moses and the prophets. The fact that it was elaborate in outward form was not intended to make it less spiritual, otherwise it would so far have destroyed its character as worship.

The word rendered *service* means *worship*. We often use the two words interchangeably, as in the phrases "divine service" and "divine worship." Paul does not mean that the worship of God in the sanctuary is *not* reasonable, but he does mean that the presentation of the body as here directed *is* rea-

V. 2:—*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*

sonable worship. To use the two words “service” and “worship” in the usual senses in which, unfortunately, they are not synonymous, we may well say that the truest and best service of God is the truest and best worship of God.

V. 2. ***Be not conformed.*** Be not fashioned; be not molded in your conduct in the immoral or unholy mold of this world. By “this world” the Apostle does not mean this world as contrasted with heaven, but this world in the sense of these corrupt times, as we might say. Your righteousness, your conduct in all the relations of life, should exceed the righteousness of the “Scribes and Pharisees” and unconverted Gentiles about you. But as our Savior said exceed, so Paul said let your righteousness be, as it were, formed in a different mold.

Be ye transformed. Be altogether different in your righteousness, in the use of your bodies, from what you once were. Let the new principle of faith which is in you have its natural and legitimate effect. Let it change, metamorphose, your whole lives. ***By the renewing of your mind.*** The transformation or change of the whole life, which Paul here speaks of as the use of the body, is to be brought about, not by the mechanical imitation of some good lives which we may see around us, but by the natural working outward of the inward principle. It is *ourselves*, as intelligent moral beings, that act; and only by having ourselves, as such renewed in the manner

in which Paul has already set forth, can our acts, our conduct, our lives; our righteousness, be transformed. Only as the fountain changes can the stream which flows from it be changed. At least such is the transformation of which the Apostle here speaks.

That ye may prove. That ye may appreciate or discern. We should notice that Paul does not say here: Be renewed as to your mind in order that ye may discern, etc.; though of course the renewal of the mind is necessary to the right discernment of God's will. What he says here is: Be *transformed* . . . that ye may discern, etc. In order to the right discernment and appreciation of God's will it is no less truly necessary to have our bodies transformed, our old righteousness or conduct changed into a new, than it is to have our mind renewed. The way to know the will of God is to do the will of God so far as already known. But the transformation of the life can be effected, to begin with, only by the renewal of the mind.

Good. The will of God is called good, because God never either wills or approves any thing that is evil. **Acceptable.** The will of God is called acceptable, not because it is acceptable or pleasing to himself, as some commentators have strangely held. It is so called because it is acceptable or pleasing to those who do it. By such it is always approved. And the will of God when done by the Christian often produces a very pleasing impression on those who witness it, even though they be not Christians themselves. **Perfect.** Wanting nothing necessary to its completeness; in no way defective; it is good, it is acceptable; hence it is perfect. Paul, therefore, really teaches here that the way to know or discern the will of God as to its content, and also as to its quality,

V. 3:—*For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

is to do it—present the body a living sacrifice to God—thorough, continuous, consecration. The will of God, as manifested in his word and in his providence, will be agreeable, a source of positive pleasure to Christians, in proportion as they obey this wise precept of the Apostle. A consecrated Christian is not one who complains and lives in dark doubts as to what the will of God is concerning him.

DUTIES IN RELATION TO THE CHURCH AND TO ONE ANOTHER.

V. 3. **For.** The first duty which the Apostle mentions is the exercise of humility; and the word *for*, with which he begins the verse, indicates that the exercise of this gift or grace is the natural and immediate effect of the consecration to which the Christian has just been earnestly exhorted. No one can be thoroughly and truly consecrated to God without being truly humble.

I say. Paul does not say here “I beseech,” but “I enjoin,” or, “I command.” ***Through the grace given unto me.*** By virtue of the authority given me as an apostle. ***To every man that is among you.*** These words are addressed not merely to the Christian community, but to every individual of that community. ***Not to think of himself,*** etc. ‘Not to be high-minded above what is right-minded, but to be so minded as to be sober-minded or sound-minded.’ ***According as God hath dealt,*** etc. The Apostle

V. 4:—*For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office :*

V. 5:—*So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

fixes the standard of our thought or opinion of ourselves. It is the measure of faith which God has dealt to us; and by "the measure of faith" is meant the capacity, the ability, the power, which God has given to each man as a Christian. Some have more than others; some have few "talents," others many. One person is peculiarly fitted to one service, another to another. Let every man estimate himself accordingly. According to the rule which Paul here lays down true humility consists in estimating one's self aright, neither too highly nor too lowly.

Vs. 4, 5. ***For as we have.*** The Apostle proceeds to illustrate his own meaning: "For just as in one human body there are many members, and the members have not the same office, so are we Christians, though many in number, one body in Christ. The Church is the body of Christ, and as such it is a unit; members are the individual Christians, to each of whom is assigned his office, or "measure of faith," or talent, whatever its form may be. One Christian may have more of the divine life in him, more of the Spirit, more aptitude for service in a particular sphere than another. It does not belong to the line of the Apostle's thought to ask or answer the question, why. Nor does he suggest that in distributing his gifts so differently God has bestowed more honor in this world upon one Christian than upon another. The distinction, as to honor, in the forms of service, whether these differing forms be due to the differing gifts or to

V. 6:—*Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;*

the very nature of an organized body, is altogether human and artificial. God has bestowed no more honor upon the hand than he has upon the foot. And hence in this sense, Olshausen's remark that "in God's creation there is no such thing as absolute equality," is not true. Though it is true that the hand does often succeed in asserting itself at the foot's expense. But by God they are equally honored. The Christian of only two gifts or talents that fills well a place that requires only two talents ranks just as high in God's estimation as the man of five gifts who fills well a place which requires five.

V. 6. *Having then gifts differing*, etc. These differing gifts, of prophecy, of ministering, of teaching, and so on, which the Apostle mentions, God bestowed on the individual believers respectively, according to the measure of faith, the capacity to receive, or the ability to use wisely whatever God might give. The true humility enjoined in verse 3 is necessary to the right use of the special gifts, some of which are here named.

Prophecy. "Prophecy in the Christian Church was a gift whereby the mind, enlightened and exalted by the spirit of revelation, was able to declare the purposes of God, and to foretell future events (Acts xi. 28; xx. 23; xxi. 4, 11), as well as to unfold the deep mysteries of the Christian faith, and clothe its moral precepts in words of wisdom and power not of man's teaching." (Gifford.) The predictive element of prophecy has long since been withdrawn from the Church.

V. 7:—*Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching;*

The apostleship was the first office in rank in the New Testament times. But Paul, himself an apostle, is not addressing apostles, and probably no grace or authority was given unto him to either command or exhort them. Hence he does not here mention that office.

According to the proportion of faith. A good many commentators think that this expression means the same as "the measure of faith" in verse 3; others think that it means the analogy or general trend of revealed truth as it had been thus far communicated to the Church. The Roman Catholic Church gives to the expression a kind of technical sense, making it denote the system of theology of the Church and forbidding us to interpret the Bible contrary to that system. It is unnecessary to say that the Apostle had no such thought in his mind. It seems to me that his meaning is that the prophet should prophesy according to the nature and extent of his gift, which is substantially the same sense as that of "the measure of faith" in verse 3. As one should estimate himself according to the nature and extent of his gifts, so should he use his gifts according to the same rule. This caution of the Apostle was especially necessary in the case of the prophet, as that office seems to have been peculiarly liable to abuse in the Apostolic Churches. 1 Cor. xiv. 29-38.

V. 7. Ministry. The diaconate, or office of deacon, to which was assigned the duty of looking after the poor and sick of the Church, and other temporal

V. 8:—*Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth*, let him do it *with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

and external matters. As the Apostle is specifying the different classes of officers it is probable that he here uses the word in this restricted sense—that is, not including the preaching function. It is used in a much more general sense, including all classes of ecclesiastical officers, in 1 Cor. iii. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 4; Eph. iii. 7; vi. 21; Col. i. 7, 23; 1 Tim. iv. 6, etc. The word is used in the limited sense in Acts vi. 1-3; Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8-13, etc.

Let us wait on our ministering. Give our undivided attention to it, not attempting to discharge the duties also of another office. 1 Tim. iv. 15.

He that teacheth. 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. The prophet and the teacher both taught; but the prophet received and communicated to the Church new revelations, while the teacher, or preacher, confined himself to the orderly and clear exposition of the truths already revealed. 1 Cor. xii. 8; Eph. iv. 11. The offices of pastor and teacher soon came to be united, the same person being endowed with both gifts. Titus i. 9; 1 Tim. v. 17.

V. 8. ***He that exhorteth.*** The gift of exhortation was often distinct from that of prophecy or teaching. The Apostle means that whichever of the several gifts here named one may have, let him restrict himself to its proper use, and not attempt to exercise the functions of an office for which he has no fitness.

He that giveth. Almsgiving, or other forms of beneficence. Eph. iv. 28. ***With simplicity.*** The

V. 9:—*Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*

word may mean either, without assuming to one's self any air of vain-glory, or with a generous, liberal mind. In either case the act of giving is to be prompted by no self-seeking. A gift of the Spirit is needed to enable one to do this kind of giving. Matt. vi. 3; xix. 21.

He that ruleth. The word thus rendered denotes a person who holds any office of rule over others, as a presbyter, a president of an assembly, a pastor, etc. The specific reference here seems to be to those persons whose duty it was to preside over the work of collecting and distributing funds and other forms of help for the suffering and needy. ***With diligence.*** With earnest attention to the fulfillment of duty. This kind of work is very liable to be neglected. It is done for others than ourselves, and usually without compensation.

He that showeth mercy. As in visiting the sick or those suffering otherwise. ***With cheerfulness.*** Not merely with inward cheerfulness of spirit, but with an outward expression of cheerfulness. It is possible to "show mercy" with inward cheerfulness and yet do it in a very gloomy way. This is not the Apostle's meaning. The word here rendered "cheerfulness" is the one from which we obtain our word *hilarity*—affableness of manner.

V. 9. ***Let love be without dissimulation.*** This does not mean that we must reveal all the love which our hearts feel, but that we must feel all that we reveal. Love without a "mask," as the word "dissimulation" here means, is love which is

V. 10:—*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;*

real, or genuine. *Abhor . . . cleave.* These two words are, as Paul wrote them, participles and not verbs. The two clauses which they introduce are intended to further describe the love which characterizes Christians. The idea may be brought out thus: Let the love by which you are to be characterized be without hypocrisy, pure, genuine love, abhorring the evil, cleaving to the good, even though the evil be seen in the person whom we love. Our love for one should not be such as to cause us to approve the evil in him or which he may do.

V. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.* In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another. The love which members of the Church should cherish and exercise toward one another should be characterized by the tenderness and delicacy of attention which characterizes the mutual love of members of the same family. The word "tenderly affectioned" is the word used chiefly to denote the reciprocal tenderness of parents and children. The word occurs in classical Greek and in the Apocrypha, but not elsewhere in the New Testament. *In honor preferring one another.* These words are usually regarded as being an exhortation to humility; decline to be honored yourself in order that some one else may be honored. But while Paul does in this chapter inculcate humility, he does not do so in these words. If this were the meaning here the word "one another" would, as the Greek reader knows, require to be in the genitive instead of

V. 11:—*Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; serving the Lord ;*

V. 12:—*Rejoicing in hope ; patient in tribulation ; continuing instant in prayer ;*

the dative ; and besides, the word “ preferring ” here means to “ go before,” “ to lead the way ; ” it does not mean “ to place another before you.” The Apostle here teaches that each Christian should lead the way, or set an example, to all others, in paying respect or deference to others. If he will do this he will not be likely to be overquick in putting himself forward.

V. 11. *Not slothful in business.* In diligence not slothful ; in zeal, or activity, as a Christian, be unflagging ; let not your zeal become cold, in serving the Lord be ever warm, fervent in spirit. It will be seen that the Apostle is not speaking here of secular matters, only in so far as in secular matters we are consciously serving the Lord.

V. 12. *Rejoicing in hope.* In the hope which is the Christian’s ; the hope of one day realizing, sharing, or possessing, the glory of God. Having such an object of hope ever set before him the Christian may well rejoice in the hardest service or the severest suffering. Many a soldier fighting for victory has been unmindful of his wounds ; the athlete running for the prize thinks not of his bleeding feet. If the Christian only endured, lived, fought, run, as seeing “ that which is invisible,” he too might rejoice by reason of his hope even in tribulation. Rom. v. 2, 3 ; Eph. iv. 4. *Continuing instant in prayer.* Ever persevering in prayer ; thus alone can our hope be

V. 13:—*Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*

made a source of continual joy to us; thus alone may we patiently endure tribulation.

V. 13. *Distributing to the necessity of saints.* The word "distributing" in its noun form is rendered "partakers" in ch. xv. 27; 1 Peter iv. 13; 1 Tim. v. 22. As a verb it means to partake, to share with; or in a causative sense, to cause others to share with us. The Christian who has enough and to spare should make the needy Christian a partaker of his abundance. The word "saint" is used simply for "Christian," the latter term not having come into common use when the epistle was written. *Given to hospitality.* The Apostle does not say simply, "*Be hospitable*," but "*Pursue hospitality*;" do not *wait* for occasions but seek them. Hospitality was regarded as a virtue of very high value by the early Church. Paul mentions it as one of the requisite qualifications of a bishop. Titus i. 8. Particularly was this virtue necessary in ancient times when there were but few houses of entertainment, and Christians were generally despised and persecuted, and Christian teachers had no salaries or regular support, and when the missionaries of the Cross, whether as apostles or in other capacities, were laboring to extend the gospel. The duty of hospitality is still regarded in the East as one of the most sacred character. It should still especially characterize Christians everywhere.

V. 14. *Bless them that persecute you.* The exercise of love must extend beyond the circle of the saints, or our Christian friends, and include even those

V. 14:—*Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.*

V. 15:—*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*

V. 16:—*Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*

V. 17:—*Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

who treat us wrongfully. Instead of invoking evil upon them or in any way seeking to injure them, we must pray for their good. Matt. v. 44; Luke vi. 28.

V. 15. *Rejoice . . . weep.* The duty of sympathy, not only toward members of the Church, but toward all; sympathy both in joy and in sorrow, as occasion may arise. These verses setting forth the duties of God's people utterly forbid the Christian shutting himself up within himself, or within small coteries of exclusive friendships.

V. 16. *Mind not high things*, etc. Set not your mind on high circles, high association, to the exclusion of the lowly and humble. There can be no such thing in the Church as a "spiritual aristocracy," or "caste distinctions." *Be not wise in your own conceits.* For this feeling of self-importance and superior wisdom is too often the cause of the formation in the Church of the above mentioned coteries, which may become so harmful as to be worthy of no higher name than cliques. Prov. iii. 7.

V. 17. *Recompense to no man evil for evil.* Render to no man, etc. The word "recompense" is as Paul wrote it, a participle and not a verb. In the

V. 18:—*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

preceding verse he said, Be not wise in your own conceits; be not self-important; be not vain in your estimate of your wisdom. And he adds: "Rendering to no man evil for evil." It is as if Paul would remind us that our self-conceit, or vanity, is the cause of most of the wounds which we receive or inflict—and this is true. The vainest are the most sensitive, and the most easily hurt, and hence are oftenest provoked to render evil for evil.

Provide things honest, etc. Take thought for things honorable, or good, and not so much thought of yourself—look away from yourself; be pre-occupied with good in the sight of all men. He who has his time and his thoughts thus engaged is not so likely to be very sensitive, and hence not so liable to be wounded, and hence again, not so liable to be tempted to render evil for evil. But the precept requires the Christian to so act in all respects as to give rise to no suspicion on the part of any one that he possesses a disposition that would prompt him to render to any man evil for evil, or to otherwise give cause of offence.

V. 18. *Live peaceably with all men.* This is an absolute duty in so far as it depends on ourselves. The words "if it be possible," imply, however, that I am not absolute master of my neighbor's feelings and conduct, and that if peace is absent between me and him, it must be due to him and not to me. My disposition should always be toward peace, and to this my conduct should always testify.

V. 19:—*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

V. 20:—*Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*

V. 21:—*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

V. 19. ***Avenge not yourselves.*** The precept in the preceding verse suggests *this* question: But suppose I do all that I can in the interest of peace, and my neighbor nevertheless treats me unjustly: what then? The answer is, *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.* Do not retaliate; it is hard not to do it. Justice ought to be respected, that is true; evil ought to be punished. But take not the right into your own hands to punish it, for it is written (Deut. xxxii. 35), *Vengeance is mine*, etc. God is the just Judge. ***Give place unto wrath.*** Refrain from avenging yourself. Give place unto God's wrath, he will avenge all your injuries. Let his wrath take the place of your wrath.

V. 20. ***Therefore.*** The Revised Version has *but*, and this seems to be the better reading. Instead of inflicting vengeance on your enemy, do the very opposite; avail yourself of every opportunity of doing him good. This kind of vengeance is lawful to you. Prov. xxv. 21.

V. 21. ***Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*** Where our Savior says, "Resist not evil," he means resist it not with evil. The weapon with which we should resist our enemies is the weapon of love, goodness toward them.

Every man, woman, and child, may help every other to observe these precepts of peace. One reason why it is so difficult for any given Christian to observe them is that so few do observe them, but seek rather to explain them away. In this chapter Paul has described the ideal Christian—perfect in all the relations of life herein touched upon.

DUTIES CIVIL AND SOCIAL.

(Chap. XIII.)

In the first part of this chapter (verse 1-7), the Apostle earnestly enjoins upon his readers the duty of obedience to the civil power. He bases this duty on the fact, *first*, that civil government is ordained of God, *second*, that the aim of civil government is the suppression of evil, and not for the purpose of being a terror to those who live a blameless life. He teaches that it should be obeyed not through fear but because it is right to obey it.

In verses 8-14 Paul speaks of various social duties—especially that debt of love which Christians owe to all men. He here founds his appeal to his readers on the darkness of the night in the midst of which they were living, and the nearness of the dawn, earnestly exhorting them to live as becomes those who walk not in the night but in the day.

The teaching of Paul in regard to the relation of the Christian to the civil government, as briefly presented in this chapter, was particularly pertinent in his own day. The dominant government of the world, when not positively hostile to Christianity, was positively indifferent to it, which indifference might on slight provocation be awakened into violent persecution. The Jewish element of the Church was

also naturally hostile to Gentile government simply because it was Gentile and pagan. No Jew, who respected the good opinion of his countrymen and the traditions of his race, could without reluctance pay tribute to Cæsar, or hold him otherwise than in lowest esteem who so far forgot himself as a Jew as to become the tool of Cæsar in collecting the taxes. And besides, was not the Church itself to become a kingdom—the kingdom of God as distinguished from the kingdom of Cæsar, and was not Christ called Lord, and was he not expected to come soon and establish himself visibly as the sovereign of that kingdom? The times were sensitive; and the applications of Christianity to the various relations of life were as yet far from being clearly and thoroughly apprehended by the average Christian. Hence, the Apostle tells them in substance to be good, law-abiding citizens, basing his instruction not on considerations of policy, not on the importance of being on good terms with the government police merely as a matter of prudence or worldly wisdom. Be good, law-abiding citizens because it is right to be so. Paul does not mean that God has ordained bad governments, or that a ruler has a “divine right” to rule wickedly; but he does mean that God ordained *government*, and that even a bad government is better for the time being than no government, anarchy, nihilism, sedition. These teachings of the Apostle are not obsolete. Christianity is now, and has long been, the strongest bulwark of the State, and it is due in part to the fact that Paul wrote this thirteenth chapter to the Romans, in which, however, he only voiced again the teachings of his great Master, Christ. God is a God, not of lawlessness but of social order. Chris-

Chap. XIII., V. 1:—*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*

tianity needs the State, and so the State was "ordained."

V. 1. *Every soul.* Every person. *Be subject unto the higher powers.* Be obedient to the State, law-abiding, having respect both for the civil offices and the office-bearers. The contrary of this is social disorder and disintegration. But suppose the State, or the civil law, requires me to do that which is morally wrong? In this case I must still submit to it—that is, I must submit quietly to the punishment. I must obey God rather than the law of the civil government when it bids me to do what is morally wrong; but when the State sends its officers to punish me for disobeying it, I must not resist the officers by violence. The conduct of Paul himself, and of the many martyrs who suffered for righteousness sake, illustrates this. They were never the leaders of a mob; they were never in any sense seditious. When the State commanded them to worship idols, or to abandon their religion, they did not do it, nor did they resist the authorities; they submitted to whatever punishment was imposed. After a while the laws were changed.

The powers that be are ordained of God. God did not cause Nero to be a wicked and cruel emperor; but Paul does teach here that, civil government, as such, exists by a divine right. He did not intend that mankind should live in this world in a state of absolute individualism in which no man

V. 2:—*Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*

recognizes any magistrate but himself, and no law but his own will. Such a doctrine of individualism is not compatible with the existence of either Church or State, or with the welfare of man in any respect. If the government requires the Christian citizen to do what is morally wrong, the Christian must disobey, of course, but still respect the government by submitting to the penalty. Paul here, however, does not discuss the divine origin of government, but simply makes his statement as fact, and as the basis of his doctrine of obedience.

V. 2. *Resisteth the ordinance of God.* Whenever a man, or a set of men, does that which is calculated to sap the foundation of government, and to throw the social fabric into ruin, bringing about a reign of lawlessness, he is resisting an ordinance of God, an institution, which God has ordained. ***And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation,*** or judgment. The condemnation of God for striking at one of the institutions of God, to wit, government. Matt. xxvi. 52. 'It is not necessary for us to suppose that Paul refers here to eternal damnation. He means that those who thus resist government will be punished in this world by the rulers as God's ministers whose duty it is to see that law and order are preserved. Government resides, under God, primarily in the people, whether the *form* be monarchical or republican, and the Apostle does not mean that a people may not change

V. 3:—*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same :*

V. 4:—*For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid ; for he beareth not the sword in vain : for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

its form of government or its rulers, to suit itself. He is writing in the interest of social order and against anarchy and lawlessness. The Christian in his relation to this matter should be a true citizen, suffering patiently when necessary, rather than be seditious.

V. 3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works.* The power of the civil government extends only to men's actions, having nothing to do with their motives ; hence "good works," instead of good men. It is the function of government, not to be a terror to law-abiding citizens, but to administer justice, to prevent injustice, to insure domestic tranquillity, to promote the general welfare of the people, etc. This is what government was ordained for. It is therefore a noble and beneficent institution, although in many instances it may fulfill its functions very imperfectly. Nevertheless, Christianity can not and does not array itself against the civil government, nor does it espouse the cause of wicked individual rulers. It says to the Christian, Be a virtuous and peaceable citizen, even though a Nero should be the ruler—and it says this not in the interest of Nero, but of government—that is, in the interest of the Church and of mankind generally. If all *citizens* would only do as they are here bidden there would be fewer bad gov-

V. 5:—*Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake.*

V. 6:—*For, for this cause pay ye tribute also : for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*

ernments and magistrates for the citizens or subjects to complain of.

V. 4. *For he is the minister of God*, etc. A continuation of verse 3. "An unjust law or a tyrannical power may make the act of a good man appear falsely as an evil act and inflict suffering upon him accordingly—a fact which the Apostle's teaching in this verse does not contradict, but the result of this suffering unjustly inflicted will certainly be, sooner or later, the reform of the law and the fall of the power. Any government may err in its application of the principle that it is its especial duty to assert justice; but no government has ever laid down as a principle the punishment of good and the reward of evil, for thereby it would be its own destroyer." (Godet). *Beareth not the sword in vain.* An allusion to the sword carried by Roman provincial magistrates as a symbol of the fact that they had the power of life and death. Many commentators have thought that the words of Paul here teach that the State has the right to inflict capital punishment; whether this be true or not, he does teach that it has the right to punish.

V. 5. *Wherefore.* In view of what is said in verses 1-4. *Not only for wrath.* Not only from fear of punishment. *But also for conscience's sake.* Because it is right, as an obligation we owe to God. Obedience to the civil authorities is not only a political, but also a religious duty.

V. 7:—*Render therefore to all their dues : tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; fear to whom fear ; honour to whom honour.*

V. 8:—*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another : for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

V. 6. **For, for this cause.** To what does Paul refer as the cause of our paying tribute, or tax? Answer: The fact that government is a divine institution ordained for the purpose of asserting justice, protecting the good, and punishing the evil-doers. The word "pay" is not in the imperative mood. **For they.** The civil magistrates, as representing the government. **For this very thing.** Protecting the good and punishing evil; performing the public service generally.

V. 7. **Render therefore to all.** In view of the nature and function of the civil government as just defined, render to all its officers their dues. **Tribute.** Poll-tax and tax on real estate are especially denoted by this word. **Custom.** Tax on merchandise. The agents of the Roman government who collected the taxes were to the Jews both in Judea and Rome objects of hatred and contempt. They were the despised publicans mentioned in the Gospels. "When, therefore, St. Paul exhorts his readers at Rome not only to submit to taxation, but to regard their rulers, even the tax-gatherers, with due respect and honor, his counsel is in strong contrast with that of the political seducers and deceivers who at this very period were exciting the fierce fanaticism of their countrymen in Judea." (Gifford.) **Fear.** Reverence, or respect. The teachings of Christianity, as

V. 9:—*For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

instilled into the character of the citizen are the best safeguard of the civil government.

V. 8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* Paul does not mean by this that it is wrong for Christians to contract pecuniary debts; he does mean, however, that these pecuniary debts must be scrupulously discharged, but that there is one debt which we owe one another which we can never discharge—the “immortal debt” of love. We can never be relieved of the obligation to love one another; and we should always consider ourselves as owing this debt. *For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*, in respect to his relation to that other. The Apostle had stated in the preceding verses the duty of obedience to the civil government, and that it is the office of the government to enforce justice; now he mentions love as the “solid support” of justice, the very basis of a law-abiding life. If all would love one another as Paul here means there would never be any occasion for the hand of the State to be severely felt by any one. He illustrates in the next verse.

V. 9. *For this*, etc. It is perfectly obvious that if every one loved his fellow man as he should he would never commit any of the crimes against his neighbor which the law names, of which some are mentioned in this verse; and if none of these crimes

V. 10:—*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

V. 11:—*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*

V. 12:—*The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*

are ever committed it is implied, of course, that the law forbidding them has been fulfilled. To say then, Thou shalt not commit adultery, murder, steal, etc., is only another way of saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. And this commandment, or debt, abides upon us. Our neighbor, be he one near or one afar off, can never so mistreat us as to relieve us of the duty of loving him.

V. 10. *Love worketh no ill*, etc. He who loves his neighbor does not wish in any way, or to any extent, to injure his neighbor, and hence he does not do it, and hence he therein fulfills the law; and hence again, "To love is liberty," he who loves hardly knowing from actual experience that there is such a thing as law or government.

Vs. 11, 12. *And that, knowing the time.* Observe that which I have been exhorting you to do, knowing as you do the time—that is, knowing that the night is far gone—it is now time for us to awaken to a full sense of the obligations that are upon us as Christians, in the various relations of life, and to arise to their fulfillment. It is a solemn appeal which the Apostle addresses to his readers with a view to quickening their Christian life and activity. "Awake, awake, put on thy strength O Zion!" Isa. lii. 1.

V. 13:—*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying:*

V. 14:—*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.*

The appeal is addressed to every Christian. Eph. v. 14; vi. 11.

For now is our salvation nearer. A good many commentators, as Tholuck, Meyer, Godet, Abbott, and others, think that Paul here refers to the *second advent* of Christ, supposing it to be near at hand, and that the attitude of the Church in regard to this glorious event should ever be one of expectancy and readiness. Certainly the Church should ever be in this attitude. But although the Apostle was inspired as to the fact that Christ would come, it is not necessary for us to suppose that he was inspired as to the exact time, or that he had any definite opinion in regard to the date of that great event. It is probable that he here means by salvation the consummation of the work of Christ in their deliverance from this present evil world, and their introduction into the purity and blessedness of heaven. We are hastening to the world of glory; eternity is just at hand; we have no time to waste in sluggish idleness. Such is the solemn consideration which Paul urges on his readers as a motive for devotion and diligence. This is the view of Hodge, Prof. Stuart, Barnes, and some other commentators ancient and modern.

Vs. 13, 14. *Let us walk honestly.* The word honestly is here used in its old sense of “becomingly,” or in a seemly manner. Let us walk as becomes

those already living in the day-dawn of a full salvation. To these two verses the great Augustine attributes his conversion. Having read them, he says, "No further would I read, nor did I need; for instantly, as the sentence ended, by a light, as it were, of security infused into my heart, all the gloom of doubt vanished away." (*Confessions*, Bk. VIII., ch. xii. 29.)

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Be and do like Christ. Be intimately united to him, and let the fact of this union appear in your daily lives. ***Make no provision for the flesh.*** Let not the gratification of the flesh be the end you aim at. Live for something higher than the indulgence of the desires of your corrupt natures.

IN RELATION TO THINGS INDIFFERENT.

(Chap. XIV.)

The great law of love which the Apostle has so earnestly commended to his readers in the two preceding chapters is here applied to enforce the duty of mutual forbearance in respect to things morally indifferent. The immediate occasion of this part of the epistle is that two tendencies, or parties, had already risen in the Apostolic Church in regard to certain practices, in themselves neither right nor wrong, and which were only too rapidly dividing the Christians into two mutually antagonistic parties. Some laid great stress on the duty, or supposed duty, of observing certain holy days and abstinence from meat and wine, probably that which had been consecrated to heathen idols. While others were not at all sensitive in regard to the matter, but were, on the contrary, proud of their Christian freedom. The one party was

disposed to criticise and take offense; while the other was no less disposed to despise their brethren of the weaker conscience and thus give offense. The chapter seems to be directed chiefly to the stronger, from which some commentators have inferred that they were the majority.

The subject of the chapter is one of perennial interest, for although the question as to the Christian's moral right to eat swine meat, or meat offered to heathen idols, etc., has long since ceased to be one of any ethical importance, there are other subjects ever ready to take the place of these, as the dance, the theater, the card table, etc. How lax is it lawful for me to be in my Christian life? or, How strict must I be? are the two questions, or the two forms of one and the same question, which young converts especially are ever prone to ask. To the latter form chiefly the Apostle addresses himself in this chapter, and his words can not be resolved into a direct yes or no. There is neither in this chapter, nor elsewhere, a direct prohibition of engaging in dancing, theatrical amusements, and the like. "This is," says Olshausen, "doubtless, in part to be explained by the circumstance that, in the apostolic age, the severe tone tended much rather to exaggerated strictness than to laxity" of morals; though it can not be said that there is a like tendency among Christians at the present day to exaggerated strictness. But the same writer justly remarks that the stress of Scripture is always laid, in the first place, on the renewal of the heart, convinced that with this inward change a corresponding change of outward life will be spontaneously produced. While no heart is ever renewed by forsaking dances, plays, and other such things, yet

Chap. XIV., V. 1:—*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*

the heart if renewed will of itself lose its relish for such matters.

There is a sense, indeed, in which it is true that there is nothing morally indifferent, and that the most trivial thing may be good or evil, according to the circumstances under which, the manner in which, or the motive from which, it is done; and thus Paul teaches in the present chapter. And because the moral character of these so-called matters of indifference—*adiaphora*, as the old writers called them—is to be determined by the accompanying circumstances, manner, motive, spirit, etc., is it impossible in any given instance to say yes or no to the question, Is it right or wrong to do so and so? But no one can read this chapter of the Epistle to the Romans without seeing that Paul's advice is, Always decide the question in favor of your doubt, and in your judgment of those who differ with you, be charitable, especially if you belong to the stronger party. The pious but uninspired Spener said that a Christian should do nothing which he can not do to the glory of God, in the name of Christ, and for the benefit of his fellow Christian. 1 Cor. x. 31.

V. 1. *Him that is weak in the faith.* Weak in the faith does not mean having little faith, or to be disposed to doubt in regard to the Christian religion. It means the Christian's own faith in regard to the true extent of Christian liberty, or, in regard to matters of conscience. *Receive ye.* Admit to your fellowship. This implies that the "weak" were in

V. 2:—*For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.*

V. 3:—*Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*

the minority at Rome. ***But not to doubtful disputations.*** Do not pass judgments upon their conscientious scruples, and thus treat them unkindly.

V. 2. ***For one believeth,*** etc. This verse in its two clauses defines the “strong” and the “weak” respectively. The strength of the one consisted in the fact that their faith in regard to Christian liberty was such that they could eat all things, and do other such matters, with a good conscience; the weakness of the other consisted in the fact that their faith in regard to Christian liberty would permit them to eat only vegetables. It seems from the Apostle’s language here that the conscience of the weak prohibited them from eating not only the flesh of unclean animals, and that which had been consecrated to idols, but all flesh whatsoever. They were vegetarians.

V. 3. ***Let not him that eateth.*** Paul does not decide this question of conscience, by saying that it is right or that it is wrong to eat. He evidently regards it as a matter of indifference in itself; but he does forbid those who have the greater liberty of conscience from condemning those who have the less liberty as narrow minded and overscrupulous. More than one local Church in our day has been ruinously divided by the failure on the part of the “strong,” or liberal, to respect the consciences of the more punctilious. But these latter should be no less charitable in their feel-

V. 4:—*Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.*

ings and conduct toward the strong; and neither party should wait for the other to make the first advance in charity.

For God hath received him. That is, both the strong and the weak into his Church, without making either eating or abstinence from eating a condition of admission, and for this reason neither party should uncharitably condemn the other.

V. 4. ***Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?*** Or simply, another's servant—the other in this case being God or Christ. *Who art thou,* what right hast thou? There is no need of supposing, as some do, that this question is addressed to the weak, and not also to the strong, for neither one is responsible to the other, and neither has the right to exercise severity of judgment toward the other. For God is able to acquit and save him, however thou mayest condemn him.

“It can not fail to be remarked,” says Dr. Hodge on this verse, “how differently the Apostle speaks of the same things under different circumstances. He who circumcised Timothy, who conformed in many things to the law of Moses, and to the Jews became a Jew, and who here exhorts Christians to regard their external observances as matters of indifference, resisted to the uttermost as soon as these things were urged as matters of importance, or were insisted upon as necessary to acceptance with God. He would not allow Titus to be circumcised, nor give place even for

V. 5:—*One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.*

V. 6:—*He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

an hour to false brethren, who had come in privily to spy out our liberty. Gal. ii. 3-5. What might be safely granted, if asked and given as a matter of indifference, became a fatal apostacy when demanded as a matter of necessity or a condition of salvation."

V. 5. *One man esteemeth one day above another.* The Jews regarded their various festival and fast days, as well as their Sabbaths, as more sacred than other days, and on becoming converted to Christianity retained, to a great extent, their former scruples on this subject; whereas, the Gentile converts naturally would not be so disposed to regard the various festival and fast days as specially sacred. *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind*, in regard to his view of this matter; and let no one base his conviction of the right or wrong involved in the observance or non-observance of these days on mere opinion or prejudice. This should be the attitude also of Christians of the present day in regard to such matters.

V. 6. *He that regardeth the day.* The Apostle in this verse tells us why regarding the day on the part of the "weak" and not regarding it on the part of the "strong" are equally admissible. It is because they both proceed from a desire to honor and

serve the Lord. So with eating or not eating meats. It is equally true that if any one at the present day should be assured in his own mind that he could better honor and serve the Lord by attending the theater or by indulging in the dance, and in other such ways, than he could by refraining from these things, it would be quite admissible for him to do so, so far as his being accepted of the Lord is concerned. But it is certain that no one in doing these things is ever actuated by any such consideration; not even is the member of the Church. On the contrary they often do them, having at the same time a strong suspicion that they are dishonoring the Lord.

Some commentators have thought that Paul meant to include Sunday, or the Lord's day, in what he here says in regard to the observance of holy days. On the contrary, that he does not teach in what he here says (or elsewhere) that it is a matter of intrinsic indifference whether we observe a Sunday, or Lord's day, and that all days may be devoted alike to ordinary business or amusements, is evident from the following reasons:

1. It is obvious from the context that the Apostle has reference to certain customs peculiar to the Jews as such, and which the Jewish converts thought ought still to be observed by Christians whether Jewish or Gentile. He makes no allusion to any recently instituted and distinctly Christian custom. We might as well suppose that he means to include the Christian rites of baptism and the Lord's-supper, as to suppose that he had reference to the Christian Sunday or Lord's day. But no one ever supposed that he meant to teach any thing here in regard to these Christian institutions.

2. There does not seem to have been any debate whatever among the early Christians as to whether one day should be sacredly distinguished from the other days of the week; but this day was not known among them as the Sabbath, or as a Sabbath—the name by which the Jews designated not only the seventh day of the week, but also several other days which were regarded by them as holy. The Christians, whether Jewish or Gentile, observed the first day of the week, which was called the Lord's day, and by these two names alone was it known. 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Acts xx. 7; Rev. i. 10. Compare also Col. ii. 16, and Gal. iv. 10, in which the Apostle is evidently speaking of the Jewish sacred days.

3. The reader should also notice that it is explicitly said here that he who regards the day regards it unto the Lord, and he who regards it not is moved or inspired by a like desire to honor and serve the Lord. But is it at all probable that there were any Christians at Rome who wished to disregard the Lord's day with a view to honoring and serving the Lord? Is it probable that any Christian in disregarding it has ever been actuated by such a motive?

It is true that all days are in some sense holy, and are to be devoted to honoring and serving the Lord, whether in the discharge of our usual duties, or now and then in some form of special service. But the keeping of Sunday (or a seventh of the time), not merely as a day of physical rest, but as a day holy unto the Lord, is not incompatible with this idea of Christian spirituality, and it certainly was not so regarded by Paul.

It was, on the contrary, calculated to keep ever present in the Christian's consciousness this idea of

Christian spirituality, reminding him, as it did that not only did a seventh of his time belong to the Lord, being therefore holy time, but that in reality all his time belonged to the Lord and was therefore holy. So far, therefore, as the matter of Christian spirituality is concerned, the Christian Sabbath, or Sunday, served the same purpose to the Christian that the Jewish Sabbath served to the Jew. As one purpose of the ancient law requiring the land to be left fallow every seventh year was to remind the people that the land belonged to the Lord *every year*, so one purpose of the law requiring one seventh of the time to be observed as holy unto the Lord was to remind the people that all their time was really holy time. And the same import belongs to the Christian Sabbath, whether it be one day of the week or another. It seems to me, therefore, unnecessary for Godet, and some other commentators, in order to avoid weakening the idea of Christian spirituality, or of dividing the Christian's time into two distinct parts, the holy and the secular, to make the distinction between the Christian Sabbath and other days consist chiefly in the fact that the former is a *rest day*. It is chiefly a holy day, a day *hallowed*, the *rest* element being in the case of many, as for instance pastors, reduced to a minimum. In so far as the idea of rest is present in our idea of the day, it must be the idea of a *holy* rest. Apart from this it is the Sabbath neither of the Old nor of the New Testament, but only of the business corporation which rest one seventh of the time merely as a matter of self-interest, and not because it regards one seventh of the time as holy and the remaining six sevenths as secular. The Christian Church in insisting upon the observance of Sunday

V. 7:—*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*

V. 8:—*For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

V. 9:—*For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*

as a day of rest renders a good service to the corporation; to the Christian himself the holy Sabbath should be an ever observed memorial that all his time is holy.

Vs. 7, 8. ***For no one liveth to himself***, etc. This is the universal principle on which rests the statement in verse 6. No Christian, who is “fully persuaded in his own mind,” who has an abiding desire to attain to the standard of ideal Christian character and life—and every Christian is supposed to have such desire—no Christian, the apostle means, can have his own will and pleasure as the conscious aim of his existence. His aim will ever be to glorify God by living according to his will. ***No man dieth to himself***. No Christian. As he has lived so does he die—unto the Lord—trustfully acquiescing in his will. The art of dying well is to be learned by living well.

V. 9. ***For to this end Christ both died and rose . . . that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living***. Christ is Lord of all Christians, not only of those who are living on earth, but of those who having died are now living in the other world. To Christ the Christian owes submissive and loving allegiance and service, while in this life, and

V. 10:—*But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

in respect to the manner and time of his death, and during his life after death; and Christ secured this right and this actual lordship over the Christian by dying and rising again for him. So far as the Christian is concerned this was the object of Christ's death and resurrection. He did not die and rise again in order that we might be the property, so to speak, of any other Lord than himself; and when the Christian calls Christ Lord, he does not do so in the general sense in which any man might do so, but in a special and peculiar sense. He is the Lord of all men and all things by right of creation; he is Lord of the Christian by the additional right of his death and resurrection. The only difference, however, in this respect between the believer and the unbeliever is, that the former recognizes and lovingly acquiesces in this right of Christ over him, while the latter does not.

V. 10. *But why dost thou judge thy brother?* The word "thou" is emphatic, as Paul here uses it. But thou, why dost thou judge, etc. It is not the province of the "weak" to condemn the "strong," nor of the strong to set at naught or despise the weak. All shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, whose province alone it is to judge. The first clause of the verse relates to the weak or Jewish Christians, the second to the Gentile converts, and the last clause to both. The Revised Version reads, "the judgment-seat of God." See, however, 2 Cor. v. 10.

V. 11:—*For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.*

V. 12:—*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

We know not when the day will come when Christians will wholly cease to disagree among themselves in regard to matters both of doctrine and duty. But Christian controversy may be and should be carried on without acrimony and mutual alienation. "Owing to ignorance, early prejudice, weakness of faith, and other causes, there may and must exist a diversity of opinion and practice on minor points of duty. But this diversity is no sufficient reason for rejecting from Christian fellowship any member of the family of Christ. It is, however, one thing to recognize a man as a Christian, and another to recognize him as a suitable minister of a Church, organized on a particular form or system of doctrine." Paul in this verse speaks of these differing Christians as brethren to one another, in view of which fact they should act and feel in respect to one another.

V. 11. *For it is written.* Isaiah xlv. 23. The Apostle gives merely the sense, and not the exact words, of the passage quoted. The idea is that every one shall recognize the authority of God as the Supreme Ruler and Judge.

V. 12. *So then every one of us shall give account of himself.* The fact stated in the preceding verse on the authority of an Old Testament prophet implies that each one without exception shall give account of himself to God. The "every knee," or "every tongue," of the prophet, does not distin-

V. 13:—*Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.*

guish between the believer and the unbeliever, the proclamation being addressed to "the ends of the earth" (Isaiah xlv. 22), but "the every one of us," of the Apostle, has reference particularly to believers, including both the "weak," or overscrupulous Christians, and the "strong," or more liberal Gentile Christians. Since every one of both these classes should have to give an account of himself, how could one dare presume to pronounce judgment upon another.

In John iii. 18 (King James version), "He that believeth on him is not condemned." The word "condemned" is the same Greek word that is here rendered judge (verse 13). The Revised Version reads, "He that believeth on him is not judged," which is a more strictly accurate rendering, though the King James version does no violence to the sense. It is implied that the judgment on the unbeliever is an unfavorable one, and hence one of condemnation. Paul says that even believers shall appear before the judgment seat, but as condemnation is not pronounced upon them this very negative fact passes as an act of judgment. There is therefore no contradiction between the words of Paul and those of his Master as recorded by John.

V. 13. *Let us not therefore.* In view of the fact that each believer is himself to be judged by the all-wise Judge, it ill becomes him to judge another believer. He should rather see to it that he in no

V. 14:—*I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

way furnish an occasion to his brother Christian to sin by causing him to act in opposition to the dictates of his conscience, whether by persuading him, or “despising,” or ridiculing him, or by setting him a bad example, or by otherwise tempting him.

V. 14. ***I know.*** This word denotes such a knowledge as any one might obtain by a study of the spiritual import of the teachings of the Old Testament. The spiritual import, however, the Jews and Jewish Christians had to a great extent overlooked. ***Am persuaded.*** He had reached a definite conviction in regard to the matter in dispute between the “weak” and the “strong,” and his conscience was no longer disturbed by such questions. ***By the Lord Jesus.*** Rather, In the Lord Jesus. Paul not only *knows* the truth of what he here affirms as any one might reach a conclusion by his own investigation, but he is “persuaded” of its truth by the fact that he is an apostle, in union with Christ, and inspired to utter his truth.

That there is nothing unclean of itself. The word “unclean” is the same as the word “common” in Acts x. 14-28; xi. 8, and is used in the same sense. It is no more a sin to eat one kind of meat than another, or to eat meat than it is to eat vegetables, so far as the thing eaten is in itself concerned. ***But to him that esteemeth,*** etc. The interest of truth, and hence the interest of his readers, requires Paul to express his conviction on the side of the “strong,” but at the same time with such qualification

V. 15:—*But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.*

as to place the strong under certain limits in the exercise of his liberty. Whether it is a sin for one to eat meat, or to do any other such matter, depends on the attitude of his conscience toward it; if he does it, believing it to be a sin, then he is just as guilty as if it were really a sin in itself. Hence, those whose consciences, or sense of duty, permitted them to eat meat should not in any way induce others to violate their consciences.

The question as to the right translation of the word rendered "but," in this verse, as in the case of almost every other word in the epistle, has given rise to a difference of opinion. The word means "except," ordinarily; but to so render it here would make Paul say, "Nothing is unclean of itself except to him that esteemeth it to be unclean." But the apostle does not mean to say that for one to esteem a thing to be unclean or wrong makes it unclean or wrong, of itself or in itself; though this does make it wrong for him to do the thing. The Revisers have attempted an unnecessary compromise between lexical exactness and the plain meaning of the Apostle as given in the King James version by rendering the word "save that." If, however, we ignore the presence of the phrase, "of itself," we are at liberty to give to the word its usual meaning "except."

V. 15. *But if thy brother be grieved.* The act, whatever it may be, may be a matter of indifference in itself, and my conscience may allow me the

V. 16:—*Let not then your good be evil spoken of:*

V. 17:—*For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

liberty of doing it, but if in exercising this liberty I grieve my weaker brother or cause him to sin, I am violating the law of love, and am therein sinning myself. ***I am destroying one for whom Christ died***—that is, I am doing him such an injury as tends to his destruction. If Christ could die for him, it is saying very little for my supposed Christlike spirit if I can not deny myself somewhat for him.

V. 16. ***Let not then your good be evil spoken of.*** In view of these considerations let no uncharitable use of your liberty of conscience give occasion to your more scrupulous brethren to condemn and speak evil of the liberty which to you is a real good. While these words are addressed primarily to the “strong,” the “weak” should also remember that they too may injure the cause of Christ by insisting too strenuously upon matters which are to others matters of indifference. Both parties are supposed to be “persuaded,” each “in his own mind,” both are supposed to be trying to do right, and each should be willing to admit this. For, after all, the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, etc.

V. 17. ***For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink.*** True religion does not consist in the external observances, or in being able to do with a clear conscience that which our neighbor’s conscience will not allow him to do. It consists in the righteousness, joy, and peace, of which the Holy Spirit is the author. Righteousness here means moral excel-

V. 18:—*For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

V. 19:—*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

lence, or rectitude, as manifested particularly in respect for our neighbor's convictions. By peace is meant harmony with our brethren, including also peace of conscience and with God. Joy is the holy gladness which the Spirit of God breathes around those who live in the Spirit, and which makes its sweetness felt among believers in their associations with one another. Gal. v. 22-25; 1 Thess. i. 6. The expression, "in the Holy Ghost," is to be connected not only with joy, but also with righteousness and peace.

V. 18. *In these things.* Righteousness, peace, and joy. He who serves Christ in the exercise of these graces is well pleasing to God, and this is proof that true religion, or the kingdom of God within us, consists in their possession and exercise by us, rather than in the observance of such external matters as the Apostle is here discussing.

V. 19. *Let us therefore.* In view of what has been said in the preceding verses of the chapter, and particularly in verses 17 and 18. Let us follow after the things which make for peace and tend to build up one another in our most holy faith. 1 Cor. iii. 9.

Vs. 20, 21. *For meat destroy not the work of God.* The work of God here meant is, most probably, true religion as illustrated, or as it should be

V. 20:—*For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.*

V. 21:—*It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*

V. 22:—*Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.*

illustrated, in the hearts and lives of believers. Do not for the sake of the indulgence of an appetite in itself innocent pull down or injure the cause of true religion as represented either in the Church or the individual Christian.

All things. Not all things absolutely, but all such things as the Apostle has been speaking of in this chapter. The particular thing to which he refers because it was at the time in dispute among the Christians, is the article of food. All kinds of meat or food are pure. There is really no distinction morally between one kind and another; but it is evil, or sin, for any one to exercise his liberty in regard to these matters when by so doing he causes another to violate his conscience and commit what to him is a sin.

V. 22. **Hast thou faith?** It is not an uncommon thing for some members of the Church to say, "Well, I do not believe that it is wrong to do such and such things; my faith is of such strength as to allow me to do them with a good conscience," and they too often add, "and I mean to do them." To these the Apostle replies in substance: Hast thou such faith? Very well; have it to thyself before God, and do not

V. 23:—*And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

parade it by boasting of it, or insisting upon it. He who is so fully convinced that he entertains no doubt about the rectitude of his conduct in doing such and such things, is therein a happy enough man to thankfully consent to restrain his freedom for his brother's sake who has not such liberty and strength of conscience. And if he does not so restrain it, he can not be regarded as being as good a Christian as he would seem to be.

V. 23. *He that doubteth.* He that "eats" with a disapproving conscience. *Is damned.* Is condemned. "He who has overcome by debate with himself his own scruples against an act which he thinks doubtful, is by that very fact condemned, though the act may be entirely innocent in itself."

Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Whatever act does not proceed from a right motive and a good conscience is a sin. But the proposition, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," does not imply that whatsoever is of faith is right. The words of the Apostle in this converse form are to be applied only to such matters as he is speaking of in this chapter, and not to all cases. But in respect to a great many acts, of course, the mere fact that I can perform them with a good conscience does not make it right for me to perform them. One's morality, however, depends to a great extent upon one's beliefs, and hence, sound doctrinal teaching is of great practical importance.

The following is a brief recapitulation of the principal teachings of this chapter of inspired casuistry,

given partly in the words of the Rev. Lyman Abbott:

1. Paul lays down the general principle that moral character belongs to the agent doing, not to the thing done—a principle, however, which must be applied under the limitations as stated in our last note above. There are some acts which even faith, or a good character, can not make right or sanctify, as, for instance, to steal, lie, and other things unqualifiedly and specifically forbidden—if we may regard it as supposable that a good character could perform such acts.

2. The Church should not attempt to lay down one absolute standard of conduct in regard to certain debatable questions and attempt to bring all to conform to it. In regard to these questions the more scrupulous and the less so are not to sit in judgment on each other.

3. Since moral character resides in the spirit of the agent, not in the act itself, the actor must be clear in his own mind before he acts. If he is not clear he must decide in favor of his doubt.

4. Therefore the man of liberal faith and conscience must not endeavor to persuade the scrupulous man to disregard his scruples. His scruples are his law so long as they remain in him. They are his interpretation of the Bible.

5. For the same reason we are to consider the effect of our example on those more scrupulous than ourselves. If by exercising our greater liberty of conscience we are likely to lead them into sin, it is necessary for us to consider whether the benefit will justify the risk. Paul certainly did not mean by his famous declaration, "If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth," that the

weaknesses of the weak are to be an absolute law to the strong. That would be to forbid all progress, and even all reformation. It would have kept the Christian Church always a mere Jewish sect.

6. Even the feelings of the weak should be regarded with love. One should not for the mere sake of otherwise innocent self-indulgence grieve a brother who is pained by a course of conduct which he can not understand or approve. See 1 Cor. vi. 12, 13; x. 23.

VII.

CONCLUSION AND GREETINGS.

CHAPTERS XV., XVI.

Chapter xv. is divided into two sections. In the first the Apostle enforces the duty of mutual love and forbearance on the part of Christians by an appeal chiefly to the example of Christ. This passage is closely connected in thought with chap. xiv., its separation therefrom by a new chapter division is unnecessary.

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

(Chap. XV.)

Chap. XV., v. 1:—*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

V. 1. ***We then that are strong.*** “Now we that are strong.” By the “strong” the Apostle here, as in the preceding chapter, refers particularly to those whose faith was such as to allow them to eat with a clear conscience all kinds of food. But the example of Christ, as Paul proceeds to show, as well as the considerations already stated in the preceding chapter, requires that those who are fully persuaded of the moral indifference of those things about which others are so scrupulous, should be willing to accommodate themselves to the latter, and not act with a view sim-

V. 2:—*Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.*

V. 3:—*For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*

ply to their own gratification. He who plays a "social game of cards," for instance, in the presence of one whose conscience it wounds, does not observe this law of love. ***Infirmities.*** Conscientious scruples.

V. 2. ***For his good to edification.*** With a view to his good so that he may be built up in the Christian life rather than pulled down or "destroyed," as the word is rendered in xiv. 20. See 2 Cor. x. 8; Eph. iv. 12, 29. Paul does not mean here that we are to make another person's conscience our rule of action; but he does mean that we are to have regard for another's conscience, exercising at all times an unselfish and enlightened benevolence.

V. 3. ***For even Christ.*** Notice the emphasis, *Even* Christ pleased not himself, *even* Christ, though infinitely exalted above all Christians; his personal pleasure was not *his* rule of action; how much less have we the right to make our personal pleasure our rule of action! He who is not willing to deny himself is not Christlike. He who is not Christlike, how can he call himself Christ's? Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Phil. ii. 5. In what Christ suffered he was disinterested; he suffered not for himself. The passage in Ps. lxix. 9 is quoted simply for the purpose of expressing the fact that the suffering, the great personal inconvenience, the bitter reproaches, which Christ endured, were not endured

V. 4:—*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

V. 5:—*Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus :*

for his own sake, but for others. It is not necessary for us to suppose, however, that Paul means to imply that the original Psalmist in writing these words had Christ consciously in view; but he does mean that what the Psalmist said was true in its highest sense of Christ. He was the Ideal Israelite, and, hence, the Ideal Man, in this respect as in all others—the Man like unto whom all men ought to be.

V. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning*—that is, our teaching, or instruction. For this purpose was the whole Old Testament written, and no one should read of an instance of noble, unselfish suffering, like that described in the Psalm quoted, without being encouraged by the patience and comfort which such an example can not fail to afford. To witness examples of patient and unselfish suffering is also calculated to induce in us a like patient and unselfish disposition. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

V. 5. *The God of patience.* The God who is the source of patience; who is able to make you patient under your sufferings, but also patient with one another's weaknesses and faults. *And of consolation*; the same word rendered "comfort" in verse 4, and the same, in another form as that rendered "comforter" in John xiv. 16. The God of

V. 6:—*That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

V. 7:—*Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.*

comfort is the God who is the source of comfort. ***Like minded one toward another.*** Each toward all the others. See chapter xii. 16. The Apostle does not pray that all Christians may have the same opinions, but that they may hold such opinions as they may have in perfect harmony of feeling. ***According to Christ Jesus.*** That is, Christ being the rule, or exemplar. If all Christians had the mind or disposition that was in Christ, they would then know from their own experience and observation exactly what Paul meant by, "Be like-minded one toward another." The great Apostle was a great warrior, a true soldier of the Cross, ever ready to do battle in its behalf; but he was as tender as he was great, and his constant longing was that his fellow Christians might be at peace one with another.

V. 6. ***Wherefore receive ye one another.*** Take one another into fellowship and affection. In verse 1 only the "strong" were addressed, here also the "weak." As the strong are to bear with the "infirmities" of the weak, so are the weak to bear with the "strength" of the strong. It is never probable that either party is wholly faultless.

V. 7. ***Glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*** More recent authorities translate this clause thus: "Glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is better, and also agrees with Eph. i. 17; John xx. 17. God is called

V. 8:—*Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:*

V. 9:—*And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.*

the God of Jesus Christ, not because Christ himself was not God, for essentially he was God, but because as mediator he was dependent upon God. Christ himself said, "My God, my God," etc., Matt. xxvii. 46, and also, "Father, forgive them," etc. God is called the Father of Jesus Christ because of the relation of perfect and peculiar intimacy. If he is such a God and such a Father as to be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should willingly glorify him by laying aside all contentions and by being united in the bonds of a perfect Christian love.

V. 8. *Now I say*, etc. This together with the following verses illustrates how Christ received us (or you, as the Revised Version has it) to the glory of God. He was (or has become) a *minister of the circumcision*—that is, he came in the first place to the Jews, being himself a Jew according to the flesh, for the purpose of making known to them the truth of God and of confirming the promises made to the patriarchs. This was how he received the Jews. In the next verse we are told how he received the Gentiles.

V. 9. *And that the Gentiles*, etc. The ministry of Jesus Christ, while it begun with the Jews, was intended also for the benefit of the Gentiles. They were the sheep which "are not of this fold" of which

V. 10:—*And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.*

V. 11:—*And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.*

V. 12:—*And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.*

V. 13:—*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

Christ spoke. And through the Jews would he convey his mercy to these sheep of the other fold that they too might glorify God—all of which was according to the words of the ancient prophets.

Vs. 10-12. *And again he saith.* That is, Christ or the Holy Spirit speaking through the prophet. These several citations are from Psalm xviii. 49; Deut. xxxii. 43; Psalm cxvii. 1; Isaiah xi. 10. The Apostle quotes these passages as an illustration of how Christ received the Gentiles into his kingdom, but incidentally they would also have a tendency to justify his own ministry among the Gentiles in the estimation of the prejudiced Jews and thus carry their minds back to his missionary argument in chapter x. and to the Old Testament passages there quoted.

V. 13. *Now the God of hope*, etc. At the close of the last verse it was said that on Him should the Gentiles base their hope. Here God is called the God of hope, because he is the source of hope, as in verse 5 he is the God of patience and comfort. He gives us this hope by filling us with the joy and peace which come of believing, not only at the time of our

V. 14:—*And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*

conversion, but day by day ever onward through our lives. Doubting never produces either joy or peace, and hence it can not produce hope.

Through the power of the Holy Ghost. It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to believe at the time of our conversion and as the ever renewed act, or the abiding state of our hearts, and hence it is through him also that we are filled with joy, and peace, thus causing us to abound in hope. Chapter v. 1, 2.

With this verse the didactic part of the epistle ends, the Apostle having no more to say by way of formal instruction. The remainder of this chapter and the whole of the next, and last, are devoted to concluding remarks, mostly of a personal character, and to various salutations and messages to friends whom he seems to have known elsewhere, but who were now living in Rome.

CONCLUSION.

V. 14. ***And I myself am persuaded of you.*** I myself, even I, who have so exhorted and reproved you, though you might infer from this that I am not persuaded, etc. ***That ye also.*** That ye yourselves, ye whom I have been so exhorting. ***Full of goodness.*** Kind and conciliatory disposition. "Paul with his wonted modesty and tenderness, apologies, as it were, for the plainness and ardor of his exhortations. They were given from no want of confidence in the Roman Christians. What Paul says in this

V. 15:—*Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,*

verse might be strictly true of the Christians as a whole at Rome, and yet not be true of many individuals among them.

V. 15. *The more boldly, in some sort, as putting you in mind.* The phrase “in some sort” (apo merous) literally means “in part” or “in some measure.” Commentators are not agreed as to whether it should be construed with the preceding or with the following clause. In the one case the meaning is: “I have written the more boldly unto you in some measure,” etc., referring either to some particular parts of the epistle or to the degree of boldness which characterizes the epistle as a whole. In the other case the meaning is: I have written the more boldly unto you, so as in some measure to put you in remembrance,” etc., referring to the fact that so much of boldness as he had employed was for the purpose of reminding rather than of instructing them. This latter is the more probable meaning.

Because of the grace that is given to me of God. The sentence continues into the next verse. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles appointed by Christ himself, and hence in all that he had written them he had acted authoritatively. He makes this statement that he may remind them that in nothing that he had said was there any unwarrantable assumption of authority on his part. The word rendered minister in this verse is not the same as the one occurring in xii. 7; there the word so rendered denotes

V. 16:—*That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

V. 17:—*I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.*

rather a humbler class of Church servant, as also in xvi. 1, whose duty it was to go about and minister chiefly in temporal matters to the needy and suffering; the word here used denotes a public officer or servant, being sometimes applied to the civil magistrate, as in xiii. 6, and sometimes to the priest, as in Heb. x. 11. But Paul does not mean that he was either a civil magistrate or a priest, and his readers knew very well that he was neither; he means simply that he was a sacred officer of Jesus Christ, having authority to write as he had written—a priest only in a figurative sense, his offering to God being as many Gentiles and Jews as he could be instrumental in converting.

V. 16. *That the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable.* Not the offering which the Gentiles offered, but the offering which the Gentiles *were*. Paul offered them, they having become, by the power of the Holy Spirit, set apart through his ministry from the rest of the Gentile world.

V. 17. *I have therefore.* In view of my Christ-appointed ministry to the Gentiles (v. 16) I have a right to glory, through Jesus Christ, in respect to my success in things pertaining to God—that is, in bringing the Gentiles as an acceptable offering to God.

V. 18:—*For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,*

V. 19:—*Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

V. 18. *For I will not dare to speak*, etc. In reading this verse we may place the emphasis either on "Christ" or on "by me." In the one case Paul means that he would dare to glory only in so far as *Christ* had wrought through him; in other words, only in being Christ's instrument in winning the Gentiles. In the other case he means that he would dare to glory only on account of those things which Christ had wrought through him personally, claiming no credit for what his disciples, Timothy, Titus, and others, had done; he would claim nothing as the fruit of his ministry and the proof of his Christ-appointed apostleship to the Gentiles, that could be at all claimed as belonging to another man. This is the more obvious sense.

V. 19. *Through mighty signs and wonders.* The Apostle here mentions in general terms the proofs of his ministry among the Gentiles as wrought by Christ through him. Paul attributes the success of his ministry to Christ, working through the Holy Spirit.

From Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum. In Damascus and Arabia, in Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, the Grecian Islands, Thessaly, Macedonia, and Illyricum. Illyricum corresponds to the modern Croatia and Dalmatia. Paul had already

V. 20:—*Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation :*

V. 21:—*But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.*

preached the gospel in the chief cities of all these countries, laying foundations upon which others might build. 1 Cor. iii. 10. He continued to preach some ten years or more after this Epistle to the Romans was written; three years thereafter he was a "prisoner of Christ at Rome."

V. 20. This verse is a close continuation of the preceding, which should not end with a period, but rather with a semicolon, the better reading making the word rendered "I have strived" a participle, thus: "Yea, striving [or making it my aim] to preach the gospel not where men had already been taught to believe in Christ, and call upon his name in public confession and adoration." Paul does not mean, of course, that it is wrong to build on another man's foundation, or that every minister ought to desire to follow his example in this respect. Paul's ambition was in harmony with his mission, and his mission was to fulfill the words of the prophet quoted in the next verse—that is, to preach Christ to those to whom he had not hitherto been preached, leaving to the pastors for the most part the work of training, under his direction, the Churches which he established.

V. 21. *But, as it is written.* Isa. lii. 15. *To whom he was not spoken of.* To whom Christ was not spoken of. The words of the prophet in Isa.

V. 22:—*For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.*

V. 23:—*But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you ;*

lii., liii., find their highest fulfillment in the Messiah. The gospel of Christ is a missionary gospel, or it is nothing, something which in its very nature is meant to be proclaimed to all who know it not ; it is good news. But Paul does not mean that he believed that the prophet had his (Paul's) ministry consciously in mind, as at least one learned commentator (Fritzsche) strangely affirms ; he means that the prophet's words were fulfilled in his ministry. The fact predicted was that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, and not that Paul should preach it ; though in Paul's preaching the words of the prophet were fulfilled.

V. 22. *For which cause.* That is, In preaching the gospel to those who had not heard it at so many and widely distant places, I have been much hindered from coming to Rome. The gospel had already been preached to those at Rome, though it is probable that at this time no apostle had ever visited Rome.

V. 23. *But now having no more room in these parts.* When Paul wrote this epistle he was in Corinth in Greece ; but by "these parts" he refers to the other countries in which the gospel had already been so far established as to no longer need his especial service as an Apostle to the Gentiles ; he hopes, therefore, to soon extend his labors still farther westward into countries which no apostle had as yet visited.

V. 24:—*Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.*

V. 25:—*But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.*

V. 24. *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain I will come to you.* Rome was about six hundred miles west of Corinth, and Spain was about the same distance west of Rome, to which—that is, to Spain—it seems he had for some time been contemplating a missionary journey. It is not likely, however, that Paul's missionary plans and ambition had any limits, except the limit of his life, and that having established Churches in Spain, he would have turned his face toward Gaul and Britain. But it is thought by many scholars that he suffered martyrdom at Rome, and that he never reached Spain.

And to be brought on my way thitherward by you. To Spain. Paul received no pecuniary help from the mother Churches in Jerusalem or other parts of the East, but on the contrary, carried help to them. He was dependent upon the Gentile Churches which he himself established for the means with which to defray his traveling expenses, in so far as he did not earn it by making tents. He hoped to be thus generously received and helped onward by the Christians at Rome, after having for a short season enjoyed their company.

V. 25. *But now I go to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.* Shortly after writing this Paul started on the long journey eastward to take the money which he had raised among the Gentiles for

V. 26:—*For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.*

the needy Christians in Jerusalem and Judea. Reaching Jerusalem he was arrested by the Jewish authorities, imprisoned two years at Cesarea, from which place he was sent a prisoner in bonds to Rome. See 1 Cor. xvi. 4, 6, 15; 2 Cor. i. 16; ix. 1. See also Acts xviii. 18–xxviii. for an account of the incidents of these journeys.

V. 26. *It hath pleased them . . . to make a contribution.* The idea expressed by the word is, not only that they made the contribution, but that to make it pleased them. Paul commends this liberality of the Macedonians in his letter to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Achaia was the country of which Corinth was the capital. These Churches of which the Apostle speaks had acted according to the admonition in xii. 13.

The word rendered “contribution” means fellowship, communion, or joint participation, and rightly suggests that he does not contribute in the best sense who does not by the act of contributing enter into fellowship or communion with the one to whom he contributes. The true giver shares in spirit the necessities of the recipient, while the recipient shares the abundance of the giver; thus it becomes a joint participation or contribution—a giving together.

V. 27. *And their debtors they are.* The Gentile givers are the debtors of the Jewish Christian receivers at Jerusalem. The reason why they are

V. 27:—*It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.*

V. 28:—*When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.*

V. 29:—*And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

debtors is stated in the next clause. It is true that the gospel with all its spiritual blessings had, in a sense, come to the Gentiles from the mother Church in Jerusalem, but, after all, the Gentiles owed much more to Paul than they did to the mother Church, and when he arrived at Jerusalem as the bearer of these gifts the Jewish Christians there, with the exception of some of the chief brethren, did not receive him with much cordiality. They were suspicious of his teachings to the Gentiles. Acts xxi. 15-40. But Paul generously ignores himself, saying nothing of the indebtedness of the Gentiles to him. He regarded himself rather as their debtor. Chapter i. 14.

V. 28. *I have performed this.* This journey to Jerusalem. *And have sealed to them this fruit.* Have safely delivered to the saints at Jerusalem the contributions referred to in verse 26. *Will come by you.* Rome was a little north of the direct route from either Jerusalem or Corinth to Spain.

V. 29. *And I am sure,* etc. Paul was permitted by the Holy Spirit to write this verse, but he did not when writing it have inspired knowledge of the circumstances under which he would actually go to

V. 30:—*Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;*

V. 31:—*That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;*

V. 32:—*That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.*

Rome when he did go to thither some three years later, he went in bonds; and yet, though a prisoner, he preached there an abundant gospel. Acts xxviii. 30, 31. It is better for us to do good, to be a blessing to others, in God's way than in our own way, unless our way be his way, as indeed it should.

V. 30. *For our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.* I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ—in view of all that he hath done for you—and in view of the love which the Holy Spirit hath showed to you, in giving you his manifold gifts, that ye agonize, pray most earnestly, with me in your prayers to God, for me.

Vs. 31, 32. These two verses state the subject of the prayer which Paul had so earnestly requested the Roman Christians to make in his behalf. He was carrying pecuniary assistance to the saints at Jerusalem; but he does not seem to have anticipated a warm welcome, and on the part of the unbelieving Jews he expected to be met with positive hostility. If we should follow him on this journey to Jerusalem as described in the Acts xviii. 18 to xxi. 15, we should find that he ever looked thither with forebodings of evil. Acts xx. 22, 23; xxi. 10, 11. The event shows how well founded were his forebodings.

V. 33:—*Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*

V. 33. *Now the God of peace be with you all.* The God of peace because he is the source of peace, as in verse 5 he is the God of patience and comfort, and in verse 13 the God of hope. In memory of constant struggles and afflictions, and in view of others soon to befall him, how natural it is for the Apostle to think of *peace*, the peace which comes from God. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "In me ye shall have *peace*." Paul was a great warrior, a true soldier of the Cross, never shrinking from any hardship or danger; but it is the true soldier who knows best how to appreciate peace. Paul was indeed one of the Tenth Legion, scarred and battered, out on the far-off frontier; but he was fighting a good fight, and was destined ere long to be victorious. There is something tender and touching in these closing words to the Romans. *Peace*. "May the God of *peace* be with you all." And after all it is not a prayer for himself.

COMMENDATIONS, GREETINGS, WARNINGS.

(Chap. XVI.)

The Apostle concludes his epistle with various commendations, affectionate greetings, and solemn warnings. The warnings are directed chiefly to those who give offence and make divisions among the brethren. The personal salutations seems to be numerous, considering the fact that Paul had never visited Rome, and hence could not be expected to have there so many intimate friends. Some writers, Farrar among the number, place quite too much stress on this as a

Chap. XVI., V. 1:—*I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:*

reason for believing that this last chapter was not originally addressed to the Romans, but to some other Church. But, on the contrary, in view of the fact that Rome in those days was the center of the world's travel, it is very easy to suppose that the persons here named had only recently gone to Rome and that Paul had often met them elsewhere. And even if he had never met them or known them face to face, the affectionate salutations would still be justifiable on the ground of the fact that they were closely united to Paul in the bonds of a like active devotion to the same cause of Christ.

V. 1. ***Phebe***, or Phœbe. The word is the feminine form of Phœbus, and means bright, or radiant. Phebe was doubtless a recent convert from heathenism, her name having been bestowed upon her perhaps in honor of the heathen sun-god. But becoming a Christian she also becomes "radiant" in a diviner sense, the bearer of this true light, Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Her name is not mentioned elsewhere; and what is here said of her is important because of its bearing on the office of deaconess in the apostolic Church. The word here rendered *servant* is the one from which we get our word deacon. It can not be inferred, from this word, however, that Phebe either was or was not a preacher.

Cenchrea was the eastern sea-port of Corinth and about eight miles distant therefrom. Paul was at Corinth when he wrote this epistle. He commends Phebe to the Romans on the twofold ground that she

V. 2:—*That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also.*

V. 3:—*Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus:*

was his sister in Christ and a servant or deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea. It is generally admitted by New Testament scholars that the female diaconate was one of the recognized offices of the apostolic Church.

V. 2. *In the Lord.* In a religious manner and from religious motives, as one saint, or Christian, should receive another. *A succorer of many.* A benefactor. Renan speaks of this "poor woman" as making a "wild winter journey" to Rome, or as he thinks, to Ephesus; but there is no conclusive evidence that the journey was made in the "wild winter," or that she was very poor, or that the assistance which Paul bespeaks for her was of the nature of alms.

V. 3. *Greet Priscilla and Aquila.* Some time before writing this epistle Paul had met Priscilla or Prisca, and Aquila at Corinth (Acts xviii. 2), and somewhat more recently at Ephesus, from which place Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 8). But since those meetings they had returned to Rome, from which place they, with the other Jews, had been expelled by the Emperor Claudius (A.D. 52); and now Paul, at Corinth again, in writing to the Romans, sends to them his greetings. Aquila was by trade a tent-maker; though his chief occupation

V. 4:—*Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.*

V. 5:—*Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well beloved Epenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.*

was that of a missionary, and so Paul calls him and Priscilla his helpers, or fellow workers in Christ.

V. 4. *Laid down their own necks.* A figurative expression, perhaps, denoting that they had risked their lives for him. When, we are not informed. But Paul had had many a narrow escape from death, and in some one or more of these Aquila and Priscilla had with great personal risk befriended him. They were with him, it seems, when he was assaulted at Corinth (Acts xviii. 6–18), and also in the tumult at Ephesus (Acts xix.). In thus being the means of saving Paul's life they had made all the Churches of the Gentiles their debtors, and all the Churches of subsequent ages.

V. 5. *Greet the Church that is in their house.* Not merely their Christian household, but the believers who were in the habit of meeting in their house for the purpose of worshipping. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. It is not probable that the Christians at Rome were at this time organized into one Church, or that they all worshiped in the same house, but that they met in several small assemblies. Col. iv. 15.

Epenetus. Unknown except as here mentioned. *The first fruits.* The first convert or offering, chapter xv. 16. *Of Achai.* The Revised Version here reads "of Asia," by Asia being here meant the

V. 6:—*Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor on us.*

V. 7:—*Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.*

province on the western coast of which Ephesus was the capital. "Asia" must be regarded as the correct reading here, the other being the "typographical error" of some copyist. Paul says, in 1 Cor. xvi. 15, that the "house of Stephanus" was the first fruits of Achaia. Achaia was the country of which Corinth was the capital.

V. 6. *Greet Mary.* The words translated "salute" and "greet" are the same word in the Greek throughout the chapter. *On us.* The Revised Version, following the majority of ancient manuscripts, reads *on you*. The great Apostle makes pleasing mention of the fact which had come to his knowledge that this obscure Christian woman, of whom nothing is known but what is here stated, had in some way made herself particularly useful to the Christians at Rome. Notwithstanding his disadvantages, Paul seems to have kept himself well posted in regard to what was going on in the different parts of the great Gentile Christian world.

Vs. 7-15. Nothing whatever is known of the persons mentioned in these verses; their names do not occur elsewhere.

V. 7. *My kinsmen.* Here and in verses 11 and 21 the word "kinsmen" most probably means kinsmen in the sense of fellow-countrymen. It literally denotes "born-together," whether of the same family

V. 8:—*Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.*

V. 9:—*Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.*

or the same country. The names in this and verse 21 are not Jewish. *My fellow prisoners.* We are nowhere informed when or where these persons were imprisoned with Paul. He alludes, in 2 Cor. vi. 5, to many sufferings and imprisonments of which nothing is anywhere said in detail so far as we know. The name *Junia* is most probably more correctly spelled *Junias*, and it is also most probable that the person named was a man, *being of note among the apostles*; by which it is meant that they, the persons so described, were eminent as evangelists. The word apostles is here used in the same sense as in Acts xiv. 4, 14, where Barnabas is called an apostle, although he was not one in the more special sense in which Paul was. Some commentators, however, think that the expression means merely that the two persons were well-known to the apostles, though it does not seem that Paul would mention this as one of the reasons why he sent them his personal greeting. *In Christ before me.* Were converted before Paul himself was. They had been Christians therefore more than twenty years, it having been about this length of time since Paul's conversion.

V. 8. *Salute Amplias.* Or Ampliatius. *My beloved in the Lord.* In relation to the Lord. This relation in the Lord in which he stood to Paul was a sufficient claim to the respect of the Roman Christians.

V. 10:—*Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.*

V. 11:—*Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.*

V. 9. **Urbane.** Or, Urbanus. The name signifies a citizen. **Stachys.** Signifying an ear of corn. Paul calls Urbanus *our* helper, and Stachys *my* beloved. The latter expression refers to personal friendship, the former to the fact that he who helped Paul in his work helped all who were engaged in the same work.

V. 10. *Apelles approved in Christ.* The word "approved" comes from the same root as that rendered "experience" in chapter v. 4. It is the approbation which comes after experience or severe trial. Apelles was a tried and approved Christian—as gold which had passed through the crucible. *Them which are of Aristobulus.* Aristobulus himself is not saluted; perhaps he was dead, or known to be absent from Rome; or Paul may have known that he was not a Christian and cared nothing for his salutations. Commentators, generally, suppose that those of the household of Aristobulus here referred to were his slaves, but there is nothing to support the supposition except the general form of the expression. So also of "the household of Narcissus" in the next verse.

V. 11. **Narcissus.** Some writers think that this was the famous freedman and favorite of the Emperor Claudius, mentioned in the Annals of Tacitus, Bk. xi. 29; xiii. 1. He was dead at the time this epistle was

V. 12:—*Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord.*

V. 13:—*Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.*

written; but those of his household, whether children or slaves, may have been living.

V. 12. *Tryphena and Tryphosa.* Supposed from the feminine form of the names to have been women. Both the names, which are Greek, mean “voluptuous” or “dainty.” However they may once have been, they were not now too dainty to *toil* for the Lord. The word *kapiosas* means to work until one grows weary, or exhausted, to toil. Persis was another Christian woman who also worked laboriously in the Lord.

V. 13. *Rufus.* This may have been the same Rufus mentioned in Mark xv. 21. *Chosen in the Lord.* An excellent or choice Christian. *His mother and mine.* Paul seems to have been sufficiently intimate with the family of Rufus to justify him in calling the aged Christian his mother. She had doubtless shown toward him a mother’s love. He may have lived with the family while studying at the feet of Gamaliel. At the time Mark wrote his gospel Rufus and Alexander, her sons, seem to have been well-known Christians. If this be the same Rufus the family must have moved from Jerusalem to Rome.

V. 14. *The brethren which are with them.* The Christians at Rome seem to have been grouped

V. 14:—*Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.*

V. 15:—*Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.*

V. 16:—*Salute one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.*

into different small bands or "churches," for the purpose of convenience in worshiping in the houses of some members of the respective groups, before any public church building was erected. Perhaps also the assembling of small bands would attract the attention of their enemies to a less extent. The persons named in this verse seemed to be mentioned as the representatives of one of the groups. See also other groups referred to in verses 5, and perhaps in 10 and 11, and also verse 15.

V. 16. *Salute one another with a holy kiss.* See also 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26; 1 Peter v. 14. This is known as the "kiss of charity," and is supposed to have been of Eastern origin. The custom was perpetuated in the Church for several centuries. It was especially one of the rites of the sacramental service, but was also observed on common occasions of public worship, the brethren thus saluting the brethren and the sisters the sisters. The holy kiss was expressive of mutual Christian affection and equality before God. It was omitted on Good Friday, in remembrance of the traitorous kiss of Judas Iscariot. It became for the enemies of Christianity the occasion of reproach, and seems to have been entirely abandoned about the close of the twelfth century. One or two minor sects, however, still observe this rite.

V. 17:—*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

The Churches of Christ salute you. Paul was in constant communication with the Churches, particularly those west of Jerusalem, and he had doubtless informed them of his intended correspondence with the Christians at Rome, or of his intended visit thither. They authorize him to transmit their salutations. So this epistle becomes the immediate occasion of bringing all the Christians at Rome and the other parts of the world closer together in the bonds of a holy love. It would be well for all the Churches of Christendom of to-day to pause in their strivings against one another at least long enough once a year to greet one another in sincerity and truth with the "holy kiss" of mutual esteem and affection. If this sixteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans brought the Churches of the world nearer to each other even for a little while, it was by no means a valueless part of the epistle. If it should remind the Churches through the ages that true Christian affection is hardly less valuable than a sound Christian doctrine, no one can ever say that it is a mere chapter of dry names and meaningless salutations.

Instead of "the Churches of Christ salute you," the Revised Version, following the better Greek text, reads, "All the Churches of Christ salute you."

V. 17. ***Now I beseech you,*** etc. What words of earnest, solemn warning! See 1 Cor. v. 1-5; Col. ii. 10-33; 1 Tim. iv. 1-8, for illustrations of the schis-

V. 18:—*For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

V. 19:—*For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.*

V. 20:—*And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

matic influences which were already creeping in among the Churches, and against which, and all such, Paul beseeches the Christians at Rome to be on the guard. He says of the sowers of these pernicious seed that they “serve their own belly”—they are actuated by selfish considerations.

V. 18. *For your obedience is come abroad*, etc. May a flock which is now so simple, so devoid of evil, so pure, never become a prey to false teachers, wolves in sheep’s clothing. See chap. i. 8.

V. 20. *The God of peace.* Here called the God of peace in reference to the divisions and scandals referred to in verses 17–19, and to which they were only the more exposed on account of their simplicity and guilelessness. Observe the caution here given, and the God of peace shall make quick work of crushing Satan *under your feet* whenever he shall come among you in the person of his emissaries to disturb your peace or corrupt your purity. The Apostle seems to have in mind here the words of Genesis iii. 15.

Prof. Moses Stuart, and others, have incorrectly regarded the verb in this verse as used in an opta-

V. 21:—*Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.*

V. 22:—*I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.*

V. 23:—*Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.*

sense, rendering the words as a prayer—"May the God of peace bruise," etc. On the contrary, Paul declares that it shall be done—not ere long, but in short time should Satan once come among them. The way to make quick work of our spiritual enemies when they attack us is to be ever on the alert before they attack us.

V. 21. **Timotheus.** Timothy. If Timothy was not with Paul when he wrote this epistle, as seems probable, he was with him shortly before, and may have asked Paul to transmit his salutations to the Roman Christians. Timothy was personally known to some of them. Acts xviii. 1-5. **Lucius.** Possibly Lucius of Cyrene. Acts xiii. 1. **Jason.** Acts xvii. 5. **Sosipater.** Acts xx. 4. Nothing whatever is known, with certainty, in regard to the identity of these persons. **My kinsmen.** See vs. 7, 11. The word (*sugeneis*) does not inform us whether they were the blood relations of Paul or not; they may have been his fellow countrymen.

V. 22. **I Tertius.** He was Paul's amanuensis or secretary.

V. 23. **Gaius.** Probably the one mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 14, as the one whom Paul had baptized. There

V. 24:—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

was another Gaius, a native of Derbe. Acts xx. 4. See also Acts xix. 29. *Mine host, and of the whole Church.* Acts xviii. 1-7. The house of Gaius seems to have been ever open to receive Christian strangers. *Erastus.* Most probably *not* the one mentioned in Acts xix. 22, but the one referred to in 2 Tim. iv. 20. *Quartus the brother.* Wholly unknown to us, but perhaps well known to Christians at Rome, as he is designated simply as "the brother"—the Christian brother.

V. 24. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* The benediction of verse 20 repeated. In this verse the Revised Version omits it. It is also omitted in the four most ancient manuscripts. It is found in the Syriac, the Vulgate of Sextus, and Clement. Chrysostom in his Homilies regards it as genuine, as do other Greek Fathers. Its genuineness is defended by Meyer, Godet, and other modern critical commentators. Olshausen regards it as genuine, but attributes it to Tertius, and the one in verse 20 to Paul. It is most probably the genuine, though repeated, benediction of Paul, its omission in some ancient manuscripts and versions being more easily accounted for than its insertion. It is not inconsistent with the affectionate fervor and earnest desire of Paul for the continued welfare of the Roman Christians that he should twice in concluding say, *May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all in respect to all these matters of which I have written you.*

V. 25:—*Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,*

Vs. 25-27. After the benediction comes the doxology, "rich in contents, deep in feeling, in which the leading ideas contained in the whole epistle, as they had already found in the introduction (i. 1-5) their preluding key-note, and again in xi. 33-36, their preliminary doxological expression, now further receive in the fullest unison of inspired piety their concentrated outburst for the ultimate true consecration of the whole." (Meyer.)

According to my gospel. Not "in my gospel," or "by means of my gospel," but "agreeably to my gospel," in such a manner as my gospel requires. This is the view adopted by Stuart, Hodge, and others, but Meyer prefers the first. ***My gospel.*** A somewhat characteristic phrase of Paul. See chap. ii. 16; 1 Tim. i. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 8. By his gospel he does not mean a gospel different essentially from that of the other apostles; he means simply the good tidings which he preached, the prominent characteristics of the doctrinal parts of which were (1) Salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and not by works; (2) Salvation provided for all. It is probable also that Paul meant to include in this reference to his gospel certain ethical elements, as consecration, love for one another, humility, etc.

The preaching of Jesus Christ. This may mean either the preaching which Christ did, or the preaching which the Apostle did and of which Christ was the subject. Both make a good sense. Paul's

V. 26:—*But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:*

preaching or gospel was in deepest harmony with Christ's preaching. And Christ was the very center and core of Paul's gospel. Both these propositions are true. It is perhaps better, however, to suppose that Paul had in mind the second of the two meanings, as it seems to be more pertinent to his immediate thought to regard him as affirming that the subject of his gospel was Christ, rather than that his gospel and Christ's gospel were the same gospel.

The revelation of the mystery. The preached gospel is itself the revelation of the mystery, and this gospel Paul himself had received by supernatural revelation. ***Kept secret since the world began.*** The Gentiles had lived in the darkness; the Old Testament saints in the twilight.

V. 26. ***By the Scriptures of the prophets.*** In making known the "mystery," or gospel, the Old Testament Scriptures were used as a means. These Scriptures had not been clearly understood, and in the gospel they received their clearest and fullest interpretation. Paul himself in writing this epistle had, as we have seen, made much use of the writings of the prophets. See Luke xxiv. 27; Acts xiii. 23-41.

The everlasting God. The God who was when the world began, and who is now, could alone cause the mystery to be made known. ***For the obedience of faith.*** Unto the obedience which consists in faith, chap. i. 5. This was the end aimed at in making the mystery known.

V. 27:—*To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*

¶ *Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.*

V. 27. *To God only wise.* He who could devise and execute the plan of redemption as set forth by Paul is indeed so wise that in comparison with him no other being can be so called. "O the depth of the riches and *wisdom* and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." (xi. 33.)

Amen. This word expresses an energetic or hearty affirmation of or assent to the truth of a statement. It often occurs in both the Old and New Testaments, and in the Gospels is frequently translated "verily." In the ancient synagogue service and in that of the early Christian Church it was customary to say "amen" to the prayers of the rabbin or pastor.

Subscription: "Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the Church at Chencrea." See xvi. 1, and note. It is not necessary for us to suppose that this subscription was written by Paul. The Romans would know that he was at Corinth when he wrote it, and that Phebe was the bearer of it. It is not usually regarded as a part of the epistle.

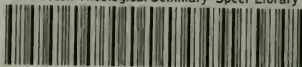
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